SIKHISM

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CONTENTS

Preface

The fundamentals and the doctrines of the Sikh religion and its world-view have clearly and completely been embodied in the Guru Granth. Further, the Ten Masters (the Sikh Gurus) have in their lives, apart from demonstrating the principles of their religion, shown and led the path of the ideal life. Among the scriptures of the world, the Guru Granth has two singular distinctions. It is the only scripture that has the words of the Gurus compiled and authenticated by the prophet himself. Again, it is the only scripture that has been sanctioned by the prophet (Tenth Nanak) as the sole Guru or guide of his followers as to their religion. And, yet, there are many misconceptions about Sikhism and its institutions. The reason for it is not far to seek. Seen in the Indian background, the Sikh religion is unique, extremely radical in its ideas and ideals, and entirely original in its approach to life. The Sikh Gurus have repudiated many of the concepts and ideas that form the basis of the earlier Indian religions. As the Indian tradition comprises a large and heterogeneous variety of systems, there is generally a chauvinistic tendency to regard Sikhism as a part and parcel of it. The *Bhagavad Gita* approves different paths for *Moksha*, including what are known as the ways of *Jnana, Bhakti* and *Karma*. Some authors feel that it is just a matter of aptitude and temperament that one person is attracted to the path of *Jnana* and the other to that of *Bhakti* or *Karma*.

Sikhism does not believe in any of these paths. Nor does it believe that there can be different paths for the ideal life; nor that the mode of religious worship or belief can be attuned to the temperament or the psyche of the seeker. The Sikh Gurus have laid only one path for man. It is the life of creative love in accordance with the Will of God. Therefore, persons viewing Sikhism as a growth of the Indian religious tradition will not only fail to understand it, but also misinterpret it. According to the Gurus they had a prophetic message to deliver and a mission to fulfil.

The object of the book is two-fold : first to explain the identity, unity and integrity of the Sikh gospel, and, secondly, to undertake, on the basis of the essentials of each system, a

classification of the principal religions of the world and, in that context, to bring out the place of Sikhism among them. There is little doubt that the task needs to be done by a person abler and more learned than I. My only excuse for making this attempt is that it might provoke scholars to work and produce something with distinction and thoroughness. For, after Macauliffe brought out his monumental exposition of Sikhism, it is only in recent years that further research on the subject has been taken up. But, for obvious reasons, Macauliffe could not emphasise one aspect of Sikhism, viz., its spiritual role for breaking the shackles of man in all fields of human endeavour and for developing in him a truly religious personality.

What the Sikh Gurus did for the freedom of man is a well known fact of history. But, the din of political clamour has generally obliterated the role of the Sikhs for the human cause. Even under the worst political persecution of Mir Mannu, the Muslim tyrant of the north, when there was a price on every Sikh head, their faith in the ultimate victory of their mission is epitomised in their slogan; Mannu is the sickle, we are the grass; the more he cuts us, the faster we grow. H.R. Gupta, while appraising the triumphant struggle of the Sikhs against the Muslim political oppression in the eighteenth century, calls it nothing short of a miracle. Again in the twentieth century, the contribution of the Sikhs in the fight for freedom against the British rule has been, in spite of their meagre population of less than 2% in India, great, indeed, out of all proportion to their numbers. Recently, during the period of the Emergency in 1975-77, more than forty-thousand persons, out of about a lac who were arrested in the country, were the Sikhs, even though the issues concerned only the rights and liberties of man and not those of the Sikh community as such. It was late in 1975 that a non-Sikh friend asked me, "What has happened to the Sikhs who had been created by the Gurus always to fight for righteousness everywhere, and even to lay down their lives for a just or human cause as the Gurus had taught them by their martyrdom?" He felt disappointed that Sikhs with such a tradition had silently accepted the curbs of the Emergency. He was surprised when I informed him that the Sikhs were the only people who had been conducting a *Morcha* (resistance) against the Government, involving the arrest of thousands of them.

An amazing lack of understanding of the Sikh world-view is displayed in the surprise which some outsiders express at the

inalienable combination of religion, and politics in the Sikh mind. What is the use of a religion, he feels, if it does not enlighten and guide every aspect of man's life and activity ? The so-called division between religion and politics, camouflaged under the garb of secularism or modernism, has so often irked and annoyed the Sikhs. These differences in points of view have led to many a conflict with the Government of the day.

The Sikhs should not grudge if they have to strive and serve, suffer and sacrifice for the cause of man. That is the role the Gurus have assigned to them; that is the task their tradition and history have trained them for. The success of Sikhism lies in sustaining the ethos the Gurus have so gloriously developed and in treading the course of life laid for them.

Let me express my debt and gratitude to those who have helped me in the completion of the book. Nothing in it is exclusively mine except its faults. But for two persons, S. Jagjit Singh, my brother-in-law, and Dr. Prem Nath, Head, Department of Philosophy, Panjab University, I should never have ventured to attempt this work. The latter was by belief a rationalist; but, as a true patriot, he was never happy with some of the negative and complacent trends growing in the Indian culture. During friendly discussions and otherwise in the form of a paper, when I conveyed to him the Sikh world-view, he was impressed by it and wanted me to give it the shape of a book. To my great lament, he did not live to go through the manuscript. Otherwise, its faults would have been eliminated and its oddities removed. S. Jagjit Singh has throughout been closely associated with the writing and the completion of the book. His contribution to it has been so great that, in fairness to him, I requested him to accept its co-authorship. But, out of sheer modesty he declined to do so. The portion dealing with Sikhism was patiently gone through by Dr. Jodh Singh, the Sikh theologian, and Mr. Balwant Singh Anand, a Sikh scholar. The first part of the book, especially the one dealing with Hinduism and Buddhism, was carefully read by my late friend and scholar, Mr. G.R. Vij, formerly Commissioner, Government of Punjab, and Dr. L.M. Joshi, Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala. In addition, my senior and learned colleague, Mr. J.S. Basur, formerly Chairman, Punjab Public Service Commission, has done a patient examination of the manuscript. Dr. Santokh Singh, formerly Director, Post-graduate Institute of

Medical Education, Chandigarh, and Major General Gurbaksh Singh, both distinguished students of Sikhism, have also minutely scrutinised the draft. I am very grateful to all these kind friends. Their valuable suggestions have helped me in removing many of the ambiguities and failings of the book. Lastly, I am grateful to my wife, Sardarni Amarjit Kaur, without whose active help this book could never have been accomplished.

Chandigarh. **Daljeet Singh**

PART ONE

1

Definition and Classification[1]

Introductory

In spite of its Judeo-Christian background, the West has, till the beginning of the current century, considered mysticism mostly as an esoteric and enervating system, not worthy of the attention of its scholars or serious students of religion and theology. Except in the time of Neoplatonism, a period of Greek decline, mysticism had virtually no place in the Greek thought. As against it, in Islam and Eastern religions, mysticism of one kind or the other has had strong exponents.That is why, compared to giants like Nagarjuna in Buddhist thought, Al Ghazali in Islamic thought and Sankara in Vedantic thought, Plotinus and Eckhart are the only philosophers of note expounding Greek mysticism and Christian mysticism respectively. With the advance of modern sciences and the political dominance of the West, mystic movements ceased to be a living force anywhere, much less in the over-confident and resurgent thought in the West. However, with the psychological studies of William James and the philosophy of Bergson, mysticism has gained a validity and respectability which it never had before in the West. Further, the two world wars, with the attendant problems they created, have changed the picture of man's confidence, optimism and purposefulness into one of confusion, pessimism and meaninglessness. It is in this background that mysticism has gained a fresh relevance in religious thought. In fact, it is now believed to be the highest expression of religion.

It is not our object to discuss the psychology or the philosophy of mysticism or religious experience. We shall only attempt to make a concise statement about the important aspects of Sikh theology and mysticism and compare them with the salient features of other theologies and mysticisms that have been in vogue in the country and outside it. Before we proceed further, it would be relevant to give a broad definition of mysticism and a classification of its various kinds; since that would not only help

us in identifying the chief characteristics of each mysticism, but also in knowing the affinities and trends of each system.

Definition

It is not easy to give a precise definition of mysticism. Dean Inge has mentioned twenty-six definitions, and many more have been given by other authors. We suggest a definition which, we feel, would be the least controversial and also helpful in understanding the subject, namely, that mysticism or higher religious consciousness is a direct and non-sensory experience of the Reality. Even such a definition could be attacked on three scores. First, that it is not correct to say that mystic experience is non-sensory; secondly, that it is not at all an experience in the sense of a subject-object relation; and, thirdly whether man living in space and time can have any relation with, or experience of a Transcendent Being, i.e. a relation between a temporal human consciousness and God who is 'Wholly Other'. But, we have no desire to discuss philosophical and psychological problems. We, therefore, hope that the definition indicated above would serve our purpose.

Classification

Mysticisms are as various as the number of religions. Dasgupta has mentioned half a dozen varieties of Indian mysticisms alone. His attempt is more at describing different systems and giving historical background of each than at their classification. It would, thus, be hardly helpful to us. For our present purpose, a broad classification that should cover all varieties of mysticism would be a better guide. Therefore, we shall follow, by and large, Zaehner's study in order to identify each mysticism that we shall consider. A brief description of the major types of mysticism is given below :

1. NATURE MYSTICISM

This is a mysticism in which the subject feels one with nature and other objects of it. He enters nature as nature enters his inmost psyche. The experience is real and even pleasure giving, but it is amoral, beyond good and evil. It is neither evil nor good, nor both, i.e., moral values make no sense in nature mysticism. After the experience, the subject is aware that he has had a real experience and no hallucination.[2] But, such experience leaves little effect on

the conduct of the person concerned. It is an experience which comes in flashes and can even be induced by drugs[3], dance, song, etc. As such, it is not continuous and permanent in its duration or effect. Zaehner calls it nature mysticism for a number of reasons. First, the subject feels one with Nature. Huxley says that after taking mescalin, "persons are selves, and....I was now a Not-self simultaneously perceiving and being the Not-self of the things around me." "One is away from the world of selves, of time, moral judgements and utilitarian considerations."[4] From the amoral character of the experience, it is certain that this state has nothing to do with divine communion as envisaged by the theistic saints. It is just a state of the psyche, hitherto non-intervening in the normal functioning of individual consciousness. One feels above the sense of space and time There is somewhat a feeling of having escaped from the world. The will to act is practically lost.[5] The personality is diffused and one is above the personal ego. The pleasure of Nature mysticism, Zaehner feels, is different from bliss.[6] He has given a very apt simile in likening the three stages of consciousness; the collective unconscious, the individual unconscious and the individual conscious part of the psyche, to the sea, the submerged portion of the iceberg and the surface part of it.[7] This experience of Nature mysticism is a reversion to the collective unconscious and has, according to him, nothing to do with higher or monistic mysticism with which the word is generally associated. In fact, even in the psychological sense, Nature mysticism is far from being a higher consciousness of the self, which Jung envisages for the superior man. In him all the three wings of the psyche, the collective unconscious, the individual unconscious and the rational conscious, are truly integrated,[8] instead of the one wing of the psyche being dominant as in the case of Nature mysticism. It virtually involves the reversion of consciousness to the stage of pre-individuality i.e., racial, collective or vegetative consciousness where Nature is amoral without any sense of good or evil. It is almost a vegetative consciousness of all things before the emergence of individuality. That is why in Nature mysticism identity is felt with the object and not with Brahman or God, who is normally felt to be something higher and different. Zaehner even calls this feeling of identity with all things as the same as 'Thou art this all,' in the Kausitaki Upanisad. It is 'pan-en-hen-ism,' or all things as one, or 'all-in-one-ism'.[9] It is different from Vendanta where the very identity of things is illusory. There, one is Brahman, and not one with Brahman or all things as in Nature mysticism.

Nor is one aspect of individual consciousness in conflict with the other aspect, involving neurosis or mania. Nature mysticism, thus, is not the harmonious integrated consciousness of Jung leading to a balanced personality. In any case, the characteristics of this mysticism are noteworthy. This state of the psyche appears of its own, or can even be induced. Secondly, while one is aware of one's personality, one feels a sense of unity with all things and beings. Third, it is amoral. Unlike the position in Theistic mysticism, moral perfection has nothing to do with this experience. Fourth, it has no impact on the future conduct of the psyche, which continues to be good or evil as before. This is an important factor of distinction between Nature mysticism and Theistic mysticism. One is only expanded so as to include the whole world and nature in one. As experienced by Huxley, the will is weakened. Seasoned mystics like Ruysbroeck have definitely deprecated this state as the one to be avoided ; nay, they have even attributed this experience to the devil or the lower self of man. Qushayri calls it a stage of expansion in which man feels that nature is included in him. They call it a deception. Sufis say, "be chary of expansion and beware of it."[10] This is virtually, pan-en-henic mysticism, a descent into the collective unconscious, or the 'positive inflation' of Jung."[11] Plotinus said, "For everyone hath all things in himself, and again sees all things in another, so that all things are everywhere and all is all and each is all, the glory is infinite."[12] This over simplification is characteristic of the Nature mystic. Even if we suppose that all the three wings of the psyche stand integrated, this only indicates the limit of Nature mysticism. This integration is the minimum or a pre-requisite for the psyche seeking spiritual progress. It is from this stage that divine mysticism can start. That is, probably, why Sikh mysticism distinctly rejects all ascetic and other-worldly disciplines. These are deemed a hindrance even in the development towards this preparatory stage of the psyche, so necessary for higher mysticism. This integrated stage can be formed only in life while the psyche is subject to all normal internal and external influences and impacts. In this manner, one educates and prepares oneself to meet these influences and challenges in a harmonious and balanced manner, without creating a neurotic or a lopsided personality. Hence in Sikh mysticism this preparation in life is deemed essential.

Junayd calls this Nature mysticism just as an elementary stage. The person feels a sense of immortality and that he has transcended space and time. He even tends to identify himself with God and

believes the soul to be immortal and beyond good and evil.

2. ISOLATION MYSTICISM

The second class of mysticism may be called Isolation mysticism. The word isolation has two implications. In one sense it means that this kind of mysticism is generally dualistic. It assumes two basic eternal elements in the constitution of the universe, one spiritual element and the other material element, i.e., *Purusa* and *Prakrti*, as in the dualistic-pluralistic systems of Jainism, Sankhya and Yoga. In all these systems, the mystic endeavour is to isolate the spiritual monad from its combination with the material element. In the second sense, it means that the goal of achievement and of life under this mysticism is complete passivity or isolation from the temporal world or *Samsara*. Since all activity is of a phenomenal or becoming kind, after isolation, *Kaivalya*, the question of reinvolvement in one form or the other in the becoming universe is out of the question, this being virtually a reversal of the mystical process by which the goal of isolation has been reached. It is very different from Nature mysticism. Whereas under Nature mysticism one finds oneself in unison with Nature and every object of the universe, under this mysticism, it is a situation of complete divorce from Nature, *Prakrti*, the illusory *Maya*, or from the becoming phenomena of the world. Here bliss lies in one's being fully isolated from the world of events and matter. Under some of these dualistic systems, the very word to describe the final achievements is *Kaivalya*, meaning thereby isolation, a stage of complete passivity and dissociation from and non-involvement with the material world.[13] The person that has reached the isolation stage is called the *Kevalin*, or the Isolated One. Even in some of the non-dual systems like Buddhism, certain forms of Nirvana could be classed under Isolation mysticism, because the goal is complete detachment from the empirical world of objects or *Samsara*. Buddha spoke : "There is, monks, an unborn, not become, not made, uncompounded, and were it not, monks, for this unborn, not become, not made, uncompounded, no escape could be shown here for what is born, has become, is made, is compounded."[14] Since in Buddhism, Jainism, Sankhya or Yoga, there is no God of the kind envisaged in theism, the ideal is the isolation of the spiritual self in its own or universal essence. As Buddha spoke, it is an escape from the world of compounded things. It would be pertinent to stress that this stage cannot be

confused with the individuation or integration conceived by Jung. A unified psyche working in the temporal world is wholly different from the disentangled spiritual world of Isolation mysticism. Some would like to represent this stage as reversion to the undifferentiated stage of the embryo, or the original universal unconscious. But, even this is incorrect. Because it is not a product of *Prakrti*, Mother Nature or the normal consciousness. This isolation is also the opposite of the annihilation of the ego by integration into a superior or spiritual centre of consciousness. In this isolation from the transitory or temporal world, there is no element of Grace of God involved. It is a withdrawal of the eternal self from all that is non-eternal or material, including the sphere of the conscious and the unconscious mind. But, Jung's integrated personality works on the psychological level. It makes no break from the world unlike as in the case of Isolation mysticism of Sankhya-Yoga. Nor does God enter the psyche as He does in the case of Christian, or theistic mystics. A similar state of integration as that contemplated by Jung, but with a passive personality, 'of allowing things to happen to one', is the object of a system developed by one school of Zen Buddhism.[15] Under Isolation mysticism, the isolated self or *Purusa* is also isolated from God. "It is, thus, entirely different from all Theistic mysticisms. It is not only a mere dissociation from the empirical world, but it is also a complete emptying oneself of all content. It is, in a way similar to the Sunyata of Madhyamika Buddhism.[16] But it is wholly different from Nature mysticism, because here it is a total withdrawal from the senses and other objects. It is not oneness with the world of sense objects or nature.[17] Purely from the theistic point of view, this Isolation mysticism is hardly distinguishable from Monistic mysticism, except in its terminology and its theology. Since once the soul is withdrawn from the temporal world, it hardly makes a difference whether the soul lies isolated in its own essence, or is a part of the Non-functioning Qualitiless Brahman, Void or Sunyata.[18]

Let us amplify the point. According to one view of mysticism, it is after this isolation that the work of God and His Grace starts and man is linked with God to form a new personality totally guided by His Will. In this development, first is the stage of man's personal integration (Nature mysticism is a state before integration, being reversion into the collective unconscious). Thereafter is achieved isolation. This means complete detachment, from the world. Some compare it to the annihilation of the ego (*Fana*) as in Sufism.[19] It is only after integration that God enters the soul and

deifies it. One might indicate these five stages of the human personality :

(i) The normal human personality, with attendant feelings, desires and conflicts.

(ii) Reversion to the Collective Unconscious (Nature mysticism) involving an amoral, temporal and pleasurable stage, when the will is weak and one feels in unison with all the objects of Nature.

(iii) Integration of the conscious, the sub-conscious and the collective unconscious aspects of the psyche into a unified personality.

(iv) The so-called soul or the spiritual element is disconnected from all transitory things. The sense of individuality and all sense-functioning are gone and annihilated. A stage of complete passivity of the soul is reached with a pleasure of its own. Some call this stage as of isolation or of merger of the soul in Brahman.

(v) By the Grace of God the ego is eliminated and the soul is deified and carries out His Will, the human will being the instrument of God.

The above explains that in practice Monistic mysticism leads no further than Isolation mysticism. Nature mysticism seeks to form oneness with Nature. But Sikh mysticism, as we shall see, aspires in the opposite direction. It tries to control and eliminate the raw and disharmonious functioning of the natural consciousness, or the egoistic aspect of the psyche. Some assert that simultaneously with the elimination of the ego, for the Sikh theist, a further stage is achieved with the help of God, namely, a union with God's Will.

While Monistic mysticism is poles apart from Dualistic or Isolation mysticism in its metaphysical assumptions, it is, as mysticism, the same as Isolation mysticism of Sankhya. The goal is the same, namely, the achievement of isolation or a dreamless deep sleep. It is final. The Vedantic position is in practice the same as of Sankhya, because Gaudapada says, "behave in the world like an insensible object."[20] The Dualists and Monists deny God and want to sever all connections with the world and everything other than self, *Purusa* or Brahman.

According to the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad in the highest state of mystic achievement, the person thinks himself to be the whole and the entire cosmos or Brahman. He has passed the stage of good or evil, a stage beyond the stage of individuality.[21] All connections with the empirical world are severed. Complete

separation, passivity and bliss are its features. It is also like the isolation of *Purusa* in Sankhya-Yoga. Some would even draw a parallel between this and Eckhart's description that 'God is not, in his essence, good; neither is He good, better, nor best'. Zaehner feels this is precisely where theistic mysticism begins.[22] Junayd calls it to be an elementary, or the beginner's stage, when he makes pantheistic utterances and feels one with the essence of things.[23] Qashayri and Baudelaire have given warnings against the dangers of this amoral stage of the subtlest pride.[24]

Some even call this stage the isolation of the uncreated soul or 'idea' (Platonic) from all other creation. Next is the stage of its reversion, by re-absorption of the soul in God's Essence. But, according to the Theistic mysticism, there is another stage of the soul when God, who is all Love, is 'all in all.'[25] For Ruysbroeck, a renowned mystic, Isolation mysticism is a stage of suspension. The mystic is not willing to do any 'virtue' or moral functioning, he being always empty. Monistic mystic, he feels, also halts at this stage of isolation, whereas the theist goes further. The former's aim is only isolation from all that is Not-self or the world. Thus, in practice, both Sankhya and Vedanta lead v. 'ually to isolation. For some theists, the monistic stage is a stage of the spring board and to accept it as final, as do the Isolationist and the Monist, is to have rest and indulge in self-love.[26]

3. MONISTIC MYSTICISM

We have seen the similarity between the Monistic and the Isolation mysticisms. But, it is equally clear that the Monistic mysticism and the Theistic mysticism are poles apart in their theory, goals, and implications. In contrast, whereas the metaphysical views of the Monistic and the Dualistic mysticisms are different, in their approach to life, their ascetic methods and their goals, they are quite similar in the sense of both being other-worldly and isolationist. Monistic mysticism may also be called a mysticism of Rest, Merger or Identity. It is a mysticism of Identity in so far as one realises as in Vedanta, that he is Brahman and the rest is entirely an illusion. In Buddhist terms, it would be an entry or a merger in the void. Whatever be the theory, the end result and goal are the same, i.e., complete disentanglement from the temporal world, which is deemed to be a snare, and to have a life of bliss, tranquility and inactivity. In Monistic mysticism, there is no idea of God or, for that matter, of love and devotion as in the

case of Theistic mysticism. In its aspect of inactivity and withdrawal from life, it is in purport and import a mysticism of Isolation. That is why in Monistic mysticism the final stage is called one of merger, identity or rest. The only difference is that in the Dualistic Jainism, Sankhya and Yoga, the eternal and separate identity of each individual soul is assumed. For the monist there is only one entity or Reality. It is only a metaphysical difference. According to Vedanta, the world being illusory, all bonds with it are cut and withdrawn. The spiritual soul is identified with Brahman in the sense of "I am Brahman". Similarly, in Buddhism the empirical world is annihilated, *Nirvana* being the opposite of *Samsara*. Thus, apart from the theoretical differences among these varieties of Monistic mysticism, *vis-a-vis* the world they are all mysticisms of rest and dissociation. The word *Kaivalya* is almost commonly used to describe the final mystic stage of achievement in Jainism, Sankhya and Yoga, and also in Buddhism and Vedanta. There is another important point of similarity. The liberated person or the *Jivanmukta*, as in the case of all Isolation mysticisms, is above good and evil, these being words relevant only in the empirical world from which he stands emancipated. And this is the most significant difference in character between Monistic mysticism and Theistic mysticism. In a strictly monistic system, as also in a pan-theistic one, the distinction between social good and evil is lost. In fact, the entire ethical basis is knocked out, since in one case the empirical world is itself illusory and unreal and has to be transcended, and, in the other case, everything is God and there is no individual responsibility. That is why in Monistic mysticism the ascetic training of withdrawal from the world is essential to reach a higher level of mysticism. Monistic mysticism not only involves passivity and rest, but is also uncreative, since creation is a becoming. It is a stage which is cut off from life and is without character. It transcends the phenomenal world and is devoid of all duality, being tranquil. But, in the Theistic mysticism normally one does not lose identity. According to a kind of Monistic mysticism, the human soul was in God before creation and returns ultimately to Him. The final stage is of re-absorption of the created soul in God. In Monistic mysticism preparatory asceticism is essential. The *Sanyasin* or the ascetic *Yogi* abandons all works, good or bad. He refuses even the grace of God to reach his goal. Whatever be their position after death, in life they live as unconcerned persons and insensible to the problems of man. There is no question of love in their life.[26a] In the Mandukya Upanisad this stage is described as akin to that

of deep dreamless sleep. "The fourth state has cognisance of neither what is inside nor what is outside, nor of both together. It is not a mass of wisdom, it is not wise nor yet unwise. It is unseen; there can be no commerce with it; it is impalpable, has no characteristics, unthinkable; it cannot be designated. Its essence is its firm conviction of the oneness of itself; it causes the phenomenal world to cease; it is tranquil and mild, devoid of duality. Such do they consider this fourth state to be. He is the Self;"[27] Ruysbroeck calls this state as evil. To the persons who have attained this state, their emptiness is of greater value to them than activity. They are evil persons. He attacks both Monists and Theistic quietists. In both these cases no activity and no ethics are involved, since the aim is merger, rest, isolation, non-duality or realisation of identity with Brahman. These persons have emptied themselves of 'all images and all action'. Here they start resting and would not let any thought or act of virtue fill their emptiness. Not even God is allowed, by Monists, to fill this emptiness. Their emptiness or rest, without this emptiness being filled by virtue and God, leads to self-love, complacency and pride. And, these are the very negation of all spirituality. From this state of emptiness, rest, and pride, the victim seldom recovers.[28] All spiritual progress is stopped and the *ethico-spiritual content* is dried up. As it is, both Monists and Buddhists describe this final stage in their system as one of emptiness and of complete severance from the activities of the mind and the world. For the Monists and Buddhists, this stage of emptiness or rest, when one is dissociated from all moral and empirical life, is the highest stage for the mystic to achieve. As against it Ruysbroeck asserts that this is just the stage when God's work should start. The person should fill himself with God and do virtuous activity and service of God. For these reasons, he feels, such monisms and quietisms are the greatest threat to true religion, since these despise the world.[29] In Monistic mysticism one feels oneself as Brahman, whereas in theism the position is the opposite. God being the Creator, is quite Different from the created ones.

4. THEISTIC MYSTICISM

This is a distinct class. It assumes a beneficent God and loving devotion to Him as the means of mystic achievement. It easily has four varieties. Let us broadly indicate the characteristics of each of these varieties of Theistic mysticism.

(i) Theistic Mysticism of Merger : This type of mysticism is

theistic only in name. It is called as such because it accepts the terminology of theism and adopts a method of worship of a deity or God. The approach is otherworldly. Life is a burden and an unnecessary involvement. These mystics generally use ascetic, ritualistic or meditational practices to achieve the mystic goal. The final aim of the mystic is merger in God and loss of individuality since the soul and God are identical in substance or spirit. The philosophy of these mystics is monistic or pantheistic. Except for their devotional methods of worship of God, their views on social and moral life and human goals are identical with those of the Monistic mystics. To this variety belong some mystic systems of Saivism and Vaisnavism, where God is assumed. Among *Sufis*, Abu Yazid is a typical example of this variety, for he clearly envisages identity with God. Plotinus among Greeks is another example of this type. Among Christian mystics, Eckhart and Anglus Silesius would belong to this category, if we should literally and logically accept some of their pantheistic utterances. Eckhart says that intellect would not be satisfied with God, but would go beyond and enter the God-head which for him is without attributes and can be described only negatively. Such mystics believe that the uncreated soul was in God as an 'idea' before the creation took place. As such, the goal is to merge in God. This is the final destiny of the soul. The entire idea is Platonic. This view about the soul being in God before the creation, has been there in Christianity, Islam and even in Hinduism.[30] Logically, for mystics who subscribe to this view, the goal of the soul is to revert to its original uncreated state in God. They are theistic mystics of Merger or Identity.

(ii) Theistic Mysticism of Union : The second is the category of mystics who accept the distinction between God and the mystic or the soul. But, the mystic path they follow is generally of withdrawal from life, ritualistic, monastic or meditational. To this class would belong the *quietist* mystics and a large number of Christian mystics and *Sufis*. Some of the Saivites who reject the ideal of merger or identity with Siva or God would also belong to this class. Their approach is individualistic. Work in the social and moral field is of little significance for them. For all these mystics the goal of life is not merger but union with God and the bliss it entails. Except for their difference on the issue of goal, they could well be classed with the first category of theistic mystics or monists.

(iii) Semi-active Theistic Mysticism : The difference between the second category of theistic mystics and those belonging to this variety is clear. They are not so other-worldly and keep their feet

on the ground both before and after the mystic achievement. While they do not cut themselves away from life, they do not participate in the tangles and tedium of society either. At best, they work quietly in the byways of life. They do not seek to reorganise life, nor do they take up a social role. Men like Kabir, Dhanna and Namdev stuck to their traditional vocations. They worked, but only as individuals. Others like Catherine of Genoa took up service activity. Some Christian mystics have carried on priestly duties. *Sufi* saints have run *Khankahs*. But, they all accepted the *status quo* in the social and political life of the day. In fact, they feel unconcerned with life in general. Nor do they try to involve themselves in its major problems. True, they are not ascetics like the mystics of other categories. Some of them like *Bhakti* saints and *Sufis* were married too. While in contrast to the first two categories of theistic mystics, they may be called semi-active, in comparison with the prophetic mystics, they could only be deemed as quietists; since they do not try either to reorganise life or to be the active instruments of God in a creative way. Their lives indicate that, by and large, their goal has been a blissful union with God. For them this union is a gift from God's Grace. That they are theistic mystics is not in doubt, but that they do not belong to the active class is equally clear. Their impact on life is not significant. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to call them theistic mystics of activity. They are only semi-active.

(iv) Prophetic or Activity Mysticism : For mystics of activity, God is full of attributes. He is the Creator of the world which is different from Him. God is not the material cause of the world. This category of mystics do not consider the world as meaningless, a suffering or a bondage. Nor are they other-worldly. They work in the world with a message and a mission. They are the centres of higher organisation and creativity. They have no self will. Their will is the Will of God which they seek to carry out. They are His instruments on earth. Being tireless servants of God, they organise life in accordance with the Will and Attributes of God. For them the Attributes of God give direction to the life, especially the moral life of man. In their lives they live the Attributes of God. They try to re-mould life. As dynamism and creativity are their hall-mark, they do not accept things as they are, or the *status quo* in life. Wherever there is God it becomes the sphere of their functioning. In the classic phrase of Bergson, their love of God is transformed into God's Love for man. They do not claim identity or equality with God. Humility and love are their chief attributes. For them

every achievement takes place with the Grace of God and not by effort. But all the same, they are full of creative activity. The quietist's bliss is not their objective. While in tune with God, they work in life as His anonymous agents. Their union with God leads to the awakening in them of a higher centre of consciousness. They are replenished with God's energy and power to work in the world according to His creative purpose. They do establish union with God, but that union is not the end of their mystic achievement. The goal is to carry out His Will.

Bergson makes a survey of different kinds of mysticism and seeks to define what is complete mysticism. It would be best to state his views in his own words. We shall quote him rather extensively : "A soul strong enough, noble enough to make this effort would not stop to ask whether the principle with which it is now in touch is the transcendent cause of all things or merely its earthly delegate. It would be content to feel itself pervaded, though retaining its own personality, by a being immeasurably mightier than itself, just as an iron is pervaded by the fire which makes it glow. Its attachment to life would henceforth be its inseparability from this principle, joy in joy, love of that which is all love. In addition it would give itself to society, but to a society comprising all humanity, loved in the love of the principle underlying it." "Now detachment from each particular thing would become attachment to life in general." "In our eyes, the ultimate end of mysticism is the establishment of a contact, consequently of a partial coincidence, with the creative effort which life itself manifests. This effort is of God, if it is not God himself. The great mystic is to be conceived as an individual being, capable of transcending the limitations imposed on the species by its material nature, thus continuing and extending the divine action. Such is our definition."[31]

Considering the features of Greek, Indian and Buddhist mysticisms, Bergson writes, Plotinus "went as far as ecstasy, a state in which the soul feels itself, or thinks it feels itself, in the presence of God, being irradiated with His light; he did not get beyond this last stage, he did not reach the point where, as contemplation is engulfed in action, the human will becomes one with the divine will. He thought he had reached the summit ; in his eyes, to go further would have meant to go downhill. This is what he expressed in language of rare beauty, yet which is not the language of thoroughgoing mysticism." "Action", he said, "is a weakening of contemplation." "Therein he remains faithful to Greek intellectu-

alism, he even sums it up in a striking formula; and at any rate he did contrive to impregnate it with mysticism. In short, mysticism, in the absolute sense in which we have agreed to take the word, was never attained by Greek thought."[32] From the very beginning, Brahmanism "drifted into the belief that deliverance could be won by renunciation. This renunciation was absorption in the whole as well as in self. Buddhism, which gave a new turn to Brahmanism, did not modify it in essentials."[33] As to Buddhism, "If we consider that we are here dealing, not with a theoretical view but with an experience closely resembling ecstasy, that in an effort at oneness with the creative impetus a soul might indeed take the path thus described and only fail because it stopped half-way, dangling all dizzy in the void between two activities, between the human life it has left behind and the divine life it has not reached, then we shall not hesitate to see mysticism in the Buddhist faith. But we shall understand why it is not complete mysticism. This would be action, creation, love."[34] "We may therefore conclude that neither in Greece nor in ancient India was there complete mysticism."[35]

As against all this, Bergson defines true mystics in terms that we have used for prophetic mysticism. "And they generally regarded their own visions, when they had any, as of a secondary importance, as wayside incidents; they had to go beyond them, leaving raptures and ecstasies far behind, to reach the goal, which was identification of the human will with the divine will", "the soul of the great mystic does not stop at ecstasy, as at the end of a journey. The ecstasy is indeed rest, if you like, but as though at a station, where the engine is still under steam, the onward movement becoming a vibration on one spot, until it is time to race forward again. Let us put it more clearly : however close the union with God may be, it could be final only if it were total. Gone, doubtless, is the distance between the thought and the object of the thought, since the problems which measured and indeed constituted the gap have disappeared. Gone the radical separation between him who loves and him who is beloved : God is there, and joy is boundless. But though the soul becomes, in thought and feeling, absorbed in God, something of it remains outside; that something is the will, whence the soul's action, if it acted, would quite naturally proceed." "The mystic soul yearns to become this instrument. It throws off anything in its substance that is not pure enough, not flexible and strong enough, to be turned to some use by God. Already it had sensed the presence of God, it had thought

it beheld God in a symbolic vision, it had even been united to Him in its ecstasy; but none of this rapture was lasting, because it was mere contemplation; action threw the soul back upon itself and thus divorced it from God. Now it is God who is acting through the soul, in the soul; the union is total, therefore final. At this point words such as mechanism and instrument evoke images which are better left alone. They could be used to give us an idea of the preliminary work. They will teach us nothing of the final result. Let us say that henceforth for the soul there is a superabundance of life. There is a boundless impetus. There is an irresistible impulse which hurls it into vast enterprises. A calm exaltation of all its faculties makes it see things on a vast scale only, and, in spite of its own weakness, produces only what can be mightily wrought. Above all, it sees things simply, and this simplicity, which is equally striking in the words it uses and the conduct it follows, guides it through complications which it apparently does not even perceive. An innate knowledge, or rather an acquired ignorance, suggests to it straightway the step to be taken, the decisive act, the unanswerable word. Yet effort remains indispensable, endurance and perseverance likewise. But they come of themselves, they develop of their own accord, in a soul acting and acted upon, whose liberty coincides with the divine activity". "In this elevation he feels no pride. On the contrary, great is his humility. How could he be aught but humble, when there has been made manifest to him, in mute colloquy, alone with The Alone, through an emotion in which his whole soul seemed to be absorbed, what we may call the divine humility ?" "Hardly had these mystics come back from Heaven to earth, when they felt it incumbent on them to teach mankind. They had to tell all men that the world perceived by the eyes of the body is doubtless real, but that there is something else, and that this something is no mere possibility or probability, like the conclusion of an argument, but the certainty of a thing experienced : here is one who has seen, who has touched, one who knows. And yet these were but the tentative beginning of an apostolate. The enterprise was indeed discouraging; how could the conviction derived from an experience be handed down by speech ? And, above all, how could the inexpressible be expressed ? But these questions do not even present themselves to the great mystic. He has felt truth flowing into his soul from its fountainhead like an active force. He can no more help spreading it abroad then the sun can help diffusing its light. Only, it is not by mere words that he will spread it. For the love which

consumes him is no longer simply the love of man for God, it is the love of God for all men. Through God, in the strength of God, he loves all mankind with a divine love." "The mystic love of humanity is a very different thing. It is not the extension of an instinct, it does not originate in an idea. It is neither of the senses nor of the mind. It is of both, implicity, and is effectively much more. For such a love lies at the very root of feeling and reason, as of all other things. Coinciding with God's love for His handiwork, a love which has been the source of everything, it would yield up, to anyone who knew how to question it, the secret of creation." "The impetus of love which drove them to lift humanity up to God and complete the divine creation could reach its end, in their eyes, only with the help of God whose instruments they were. Therefore all their efforts must be concentrated on a very great, a very difficult, but a limited task. Other efforts would be forthcoming, indeed others had already been; they would all be convergent, since God imparted to them their uniy." "He takes the most crying needs first. In reality, the task of the great mystic is to effect a radical transformation of humanity by setting an example." "God is love, and the object of love : herein lies the whole contribution of mysticism. About this twofold love the mystic will never have done talking. His description is interminable, because what he wants to describe is ineffable. But what he does state clearly is that divine love is not a thing of God; it is God Himself." Nevertheless, it is hard to conceive a love which is, so to speak, at work, and yet applies to nothing. As a matter of fact, the mystics unanimously bear witness that God needs us, just as we need God. Why should He need us unless it be to love us ? And it is to this very conclusion that the philosopher who holds to the mystical experience must come. Creation will appear to him as God undertaking to create creators, that He may have, besides Himself, beings worthy of His love."[36]

There is, thus, a clear distinction, if not a demarcation, between the experience and consciousness of the ordinary mystic and the prophetic or activity mystic. Hocking feels that the prophet is "a mystic in action". His revelation is "a message specifically related to the circumstances and events of his time." He is called to carry out the message. "His union with God is functional." This identification is for a specific purpose. That message has to be delivered and the task has to be done in the world. It is different with ordinary mystics. They only seek "union with God as an end in itself."[37] It does transform their being, but involves no specific

undertaking or accomplishment in the world of man. The prophet not only establishes a communion with God and develops a higher spiritual consciousness, but also becomes, in the domain of life, the divine organising vehicle of the Transcendent Reality. In all humility he seeks to translate into activity the will of God. This forms his continuing mission. Such is Prophetic mysticism. For Huxley the mystic overflows with love. Hence his commitment and participation in life is complete. Staying back in ecstasy is 'absolutely catastrophic'.[38]

Nature of Mysticism

We have given above some of the broad features and fundamentals of each type of mysticism. Before we start with our proposed descriptive and comparative study of various religions or mysticisms, it is necessary to record an important word of caution. Mysticism by its very definition and nature is a direct, personal and extra-sensory experience of Reality by the mystic concerned. It is un-governed and un-influenced by normal historical or materialistic circumstances. It would, therefore, be naive and self-contradictory, by any standard, to understand and interpret mysticism as a materialistic or mechanistic growth following the impact of environmental or historical forces. No doubt, mysticism has appeared in all climates and countries and in all periods of human history. During the last three millennia, most religious movements are connected with mysticisms of some kind or the other. It is undeniable that practically all world religions have traced their origin to the mystic experience of a prophetic kind. It is also true that, after the demise of the prophets concerned, these religious movements have affected and been affected by historical events. There is, thus, a tendency to relate the origin and growth of these later developments to the then prevailing environmental factors. But, it is also significant to note that soon after the demise of the prophet concerned there has generally been a schism between the mystic followers of the prophet and the established church of that religion. So much so that there has been severe persecution of such mystics at the hands of the established religion. So often true mystics have been dubbed as heretics. The reason for this is obvious. For the mystic, personal and direct experience of Reality is supreme and final in its certitude and authority. By the very nature of that experience and his devotion and submission to it, it would be impossible and self-destructive for the mystic to subordinate the authority of his experience to the

dictates of an outside authority, howsoever respected or exalted it may be, if such, dictates should run counter to his own mystic experience. No mystic worth his salt can give second place to his knowledge, gained from his direct experience, to perceptions and conceptions conveyed otherwise. In fact, the certitude or the impact left is the fundamental characteristic of the mystic experience as also of its truth. In one sense mystics are the most true and honest devotees of knowledge if the word is to include not only rational knowledge but also knowledge gained through mystic experience or intuition, or what Plato calls 'knowledge' as against 'opinion'. All we wish to stress is that while there is temptation and a tendency among historians, narrow or committed in their outlook, to relate the growth and origin of mysticism to environmental factors, mysticism by its very nature and definition is a 'mutation', uninfluenced by mechanistic or environmental factors. Mysticism being a creative, vital, free or intuitional growth, it would be self-contradictory to measure it by the yardstick of causality and determinism. While assessments and views of historians can have relevance to the growth and developments of the established churches, it would just be idle and simplistic to extend these conjectures to a field that is non-rational and non-sensory, and, to that extent, free and creative by its very nature and conception. We shall try to amplify this point further while drawing our conclusions. Here we should only like to indicate and emphasise that the mystic growths are ungoverned by history and geography.

The Scope of the Study

For our comparative discussion we shall delineate important mystic or religious growths in the world and determine, in the light of the classification laid down in this chapter, their theology, characteristics and class. Within the scope of our study, it would, obviously, not be possible for us to make a detailed survey of the major world religions. Therefore, for our purpose we shall confine ourselves only to the essential aspects of each of them. In order to be fully expressive and comparative, we should like to indicate the replies of each system to about seven fundamental issues. These replies would prominently bring out the important criteria of each religion or mysticism. Answers to these questions will, besides enabling us to be concise and precise, help us in highlighting the major points of approach, identity and differences among the various religious systems. These will also help us in their

classification and understanding their theology. Following are the relevant issues, mostly theological in character, which should enable us in bringing out the important features of each religion :

1. What are the broad metaphysical assumptions which the system accepts ?
2. Is the world real ?
3. Is life in the world worthwhile or a bondage or a suffering ?
4. What is the ideal life or goal of man ?
5. What kind of life will lead to that goal ?
6. What is the role of the mystic or the superman after the achievement of the goal ?
7. What is the attitude of the mystic towards social and political life ?

In briefly describing each religion we shall try to state what are broadly its replies to the seven important questions posed above. The stated position of other religions will alone help us in making a meaningful comparison with Sikhism and in truly understanding and appreciating its real character and role. The remaining portion of the first part will be devoted to the description of some of the great religions. The second part will contain a full and comparative account of Sikhism and our conclusions about religion and religious experience in general and Sikhism in particular.

2

Indian Dualistic Religions[1]

Jainism

In the Indian religions, there are two distinct systems of thought. One of them holds that the ultimate reality is one, and the other believes that the ultimate reality comprises two elements, one spiritual and the other material. It is now recognised by all that there was a distinct and well-formed pre-Aryan religious tradition in India, called the Sramanic tradition. The first historic successors of it are probably the Jains. Perhaps, in the same lineage are the two other dualistic systems of Sankhya and Yoga. We shall deal with these dualistic-pluralistic mysticisms first. Hence the treatment of Jainism, being the oldest of them.

According to Jainism the world is constituted of two elements, the material part (*Ajiva*) and the spiritual element, called the life-monad (*Jiva*). Both these elements are co-eternal. The system is dualistic in this respect. *Ajiva* has five-fold division. No God or the creator of the universe is assumed. Man is a combination of two components, a spiritual one and a material one. The system is pluralistic in the sense that the number of life-monads or *Jivas* is numerous. Even material entities and plants have souls, but of a lower class than that of human beings.[2] The world is without doubt real. So also are its various objects. But, it is changing constantly because of the flow of *Karmic* matter following human activity. The spiritual element is pure, but its purity is dimmed by its combination with the material element and by the flow of *Lesyas*, colours or activities into the pure life-monad. This combination is, thus, deemed to be an entanglement and suffering. By its very definition, all activity darkens and soils the spiritual character of the life-monad or *Jiva*. All activities whether virtuous or evil contaminate the spiritual element. This combination of the spiritual with the material element is, thus, unwanted and a failing. It is a limitation of the spiritual element. It is a bondage. To go on living

is to go on accumulating *Karmic* matter or *Lesyas* which are of six colours compared to the three *Gunas* of Sankhya. These enter the spiritual element to further involve it and thereby darken and limit its purity.

It is as the result of the above assumptions and its logic that the goal of life is fixed. An embodied existence being the unwanted combination of the pure spiritual element with the material element, life being a bondage and a suffering and all activity being an entanglement, the goal of life, naturally, is to secure the release and isolation of the life monad from this restrictive combination and bondage. All activities are limiting and sow the seeds of further involvement. Activity even for the welfare of anyone only misses the objective, making thereby new bonds and the existing ones more tight. Even virtuous acts bind both the benefactor and the beneficiary. There has to be a total rejection of all activities with a view to release. Naturally, the only method of salvation or *Moksa* is, first, to end all new activities, and secondly, by *Tapas*, meditation or asceticism, to burn the residue and accumulation of all past activities. One has to stop the flow of the *Karmic* particles into the spiritual monad since these defile its purity. The aim is to regain the purity of the soul or the spiritual-monad. Right faith, right knowledge and right conduct, including *Ahimsa* or non-killing, are recommended.[3] Since the bond is between the individual monad and the material element, all efforts at deliverance have also to be individual, especially because it is personal release from all social life that has to be secured. According to the conservative Digambara Sect, who live naked, women are not allowed to take ascetic vows for liberation. They have to wait till a masculine incarnation.[4]

Under this system, there is full religious sanction to methods and practices of extreme asceticism and total withdrawal from life and its activities. All the methods used and the practices prescribed to achieve the goal are severely abstinent and tortuous. These include the concentration of mind and abstention from all activity. By the heat of *Tapas* and by rigorous ascetic means alone, is the accumulation from the effects of past and present activities cleared and the spiritual monad restored to its pristine purity. In its isolation the spiritual monad is omniscient. It is this aspect of the matter which makes the system mystic. This final stage of release is called *Kaivalya*, or isolation, and the person, or life-monad concerned, is called the *Kevalin*, or one who has secured isolation. It is a state of complete non-involvement in the world and dissociation from

the material element or the *Karmic* matter. The net result is a total rejection of all values of life so as to secure freedom from bondage in this world of suffering. This is the ideal. There is no human concern for social welfare or matters, much less for the creation of a perfect society. The final state is of psychic dissociation from and non-participation in life. After the release of the soul or the monad, it never returns to the world, since any such concern or involvement would, naturally, create the old evil of bondage from which release had been secured. Any reversion to life would be a clear fall of the isolated *Kevalin*. Therefore, return to the world is barred forever. The isolated one, the *Kevalin* alone is free. As such, he never answers prayers of anyone. All life is supposed to be working for the goal of release from the bondage of *Jiva* with *Ajiva*.

Further, since no God is assumed, the logic of the system involves no element of grace of God. Consequently, all efforts at release from the bondage have to be of an individual nature. In the background of our classification defined earlier, the system is a clear-cut and typical instance of a mysticism of Isolation.

For a number of reasons Jain mysticism has an importance. We have indicated briefly the natural logic of dualistic systems. The combination of the two elements being unwanted, naturally, all effort is made to secure release from this bondage and the consequent sufferings of the worldly life. Hence the terms bondage, suffering, and release, and the final stage of *Kaivalya* or isolation and of *Kevalin*, the isolated one. The second reason is the affinity this system has not only with dualistic systems but also practically with all other religious systems in this country. Because, despite their metaphysical and theological differences, the general approach towards life remains the same as under Jainism. So much so that the ideas of *(a)* the temporal world being a suffering, a bondage, or an involvement, *(b)* the object of spiritual life being to secure release, deliverance or salvation, *(c)* the methods of release being ascetic, and *(d)* the spiritual aim being *Kaivalya* or isolation, are accepted in other religious traditions too. Not only is the meaning of various terms common and accepted but the other-worldly approach also remains the same both in orthodox and heterodox systems, including Buddhism. Thirdly, ideas, ideals and approach of this system are in complete contrast with those of Sikh mysticism.

Sankhya Mysticism

Sankhya mysticism like Jainism, which according to Zimmer is the precursor of the systems of Sankhya and Yoga, also believes in dualism, the co-eternal character of *Purusas* and *Prakrti*, and the plurality of *Purusas*. The world is real and man is a combination of *Purusa* and *Prakrti*. All life is a phenomenon of the changing combinations or transformations of the three *Gunas* or strands of *Prakrti*. Instead of the five *Lesyas*, as in the case of Jainism, here three *Gunas* are assumed. The potential causes of all transformations and effects lie latent in *Prakrti*. These changes become manifest only when certain conditions like efficient causes appear. Nothing new ever comes afresh, nor anything dies out. Everything is potentially pre-existent. It assumes the system of cycles and of change, dissolution and reappearance. During this transformation of the three *Gunas*, to which is due all life, including psychic life and the working of the egoity (*Ahankara*), the individual *Purusa* remains virtually an idle spectator. He is the enjoyer (*bhokta*) but not the partaker or director of the change.

The mystic goal is the deliverance of *Purusa* from the grip of *Prakrti*. Life is a bondage and a suffering. The method of release of the spiritual *Purusa* is by contemplative ascetic, and intellectual means. So whatever be the other feature of the Sankhya mysticism, its approach, practices and ideals are, because of its philosophy and logic, practically the same as those of Jainism. Here too the final stage of achievement is called *Kaivalya* or isolation of the individual *Purusa*. There is no God, but only a plurality of *Purusas*. The entire universe is a form of the *Prakrti*, and the *Purusa* is completely passive and static. It does not will anything; it is only the looker-on.[5] In this state of inactivity of *Purusa*, its life is an imperfection. This imperfection continues so long as the combination with *Prakrti* is there. Life being a suffering, the aim, naturally, is to escape from this bondage to a state of *Kaivalya*, final aloofness or isolation. It is a liberation from the physical bonds which are completely thrown off. Contemplation and reflection lead to true knowledge. Thereby *Purusa* sees through the game of the empirical self. Self-realisation here means escape from *Prakrti*. Each individual has to gain this isolation by his personal learning, effort and experience. Here too it is a gospel of self-isolation. In some systems the isolation is for merger. But, here it is for complete isolation by dissociation from *Prakrti*. Celibacy, *Ahimsa* and withdrawal from life are recommended. The aim of changes in *Prakrti* is to enable release or perfection of the *Purusa*

bound to *Prakrti*. So far as *Jivanmukta* is concerned, he is free from bondage. He continues to live. But, he lives virtually blind to *Prakrti* and almost as a dead person. Therefore, the *Jivanmukta* has no role in life, social or political. Since all involvement in life is counter to the desired aim and objective, once the final aloofness or *Kaivalya* of *Purusa* is secured, the question of re-involvement in or return to life does not arise. This too is a mysticism of Isolation.

Yoga

Among the dualistic systems, Yoga is historically, perhaps, a very old system. Some even call it a supplementary system or the practical side of *Sankhya*.[6] The general metaphysical assumptions and the goal are the same as in *Sankhya*. Co-eternal *Purusas* and *Prakrti* are assumed. *Purusas* are infinite in number. Life is real and is a combination of the spiritual and the material elements. All mental and physical activities of life are, as accepted in Sankhya, attributed to the variations of the three *Gunas* of *Prakrti*. Here too *Purusa*, while in combination with *Prakrti*, is passive and merely a looker-on of the movements of *Prakrti*.

A God (*Ishvara*) is assumed but the concept of *Lord* is entirely different from what it is in the theistic systems. Here, God is nothing more than a senior *Purusa*. He is not the creator of the universe or *Prakrti* which by itself is co-eternal. Nor is this God all-comprehending and the sustainer or director of the world. He is not omnipotent. Normally, there is no devotion to God. The perfection of God is only a model to follow. He does, however, at times help the individual *Purusa* in the achievement of its isolation from *Prakrti*. In older yoga, methods were used to reach *Kaivalya* without the intervention of God's grace. May be, God is a later introduction or development in the system. He has virtually not much of a role to play. It has, therefore, been suggested that the idea of God is not organic to the system.[7]

Actually, Yoga is not a new metaphysical system, but it is only a means to the peace of mind and to gain power. Life is a bondage and a suffering. The ideal of freedom from the bondage of senses and mind is at the root of all Yogic practices. The aim is to dissociate oneself from our sensations and thoughts of the mind. Some feel that as the hermit and the like were dissatisfied with the world, their sole ambition was to become, by the practice of Yoga, absolutely free from all the activities of the mind and the consequent human sufferings. Hence all mental processes,

conscious or subconscious, had to be destroyed and stopped, and the mind filled with spirit alone. As such, the goal is withdrawal from life and the achievement of *Kaivalya*, or complete isolation of *Purusa* from *Prakrti*. While most other aspects are identical with Sankhya, the method of release, instead of its being contemplative, intellectual and philosophic, is meditative and comparatively ascetic. We have to isolate *Purusa* by ascetic and meditational means. As a pre-requisite, the negative and passive virtues of *Ahimsa* are recommended. For his release a person would remain in meditation, without food and in one pose, for days and months, and even for years. The object is to stop all the activities of the mind.

After the physical preparation of the body, practices of the mind start. Mind is concentrated on one point or object and is lost in *Samadhi* or meditative concentration. By it the duality of the subject-object relation is eliminated. A new intuition called *Prajna*, similar to the *Prajnana* of Upanisads, is developed and the real essence of Nature is known. The object of awakening intuition is to know, in a non-conceptual way, the inside and reality of everything. This knowledge is not through the mind, and is mystic. At this stage, one should have disinclination towards the world. This intuition is free from error and distortion, with no intrusion of or inclination for the world. The mind is disintegrated, and, ultimately, so also is this intuition. The pure self (*Purusa*) is isolated. It is absolutely free, without any bonds and passion, self-sufficient and singular in self-illumination. Unless mind is destroyed, no intuition is possible, and later this intuition too is destroyed. Finally, man ceases to live and the pure spirit or self remains. The bondage is broken, because it is bondage that leads to all the false activities of man. The final state or knowledge is of the self-shining soul. This knowledge or revelation is non-cognitive, non-feeling, non-intuitive and, in a way unconscious.

As Yogis discovered methods for good health, they became independent; The idea of seeking God's help was also given up. *Samadhi* is a stage when mind is one with the object and its reality without awareness of anything else. Yoga believes that not only does the interference of mind cause error, but ultimately the mind itself should be destroyed. Unless this is done, there can be no realisation of the highest truth. This is fundamental to Yoga. Knowledge is of three kinds. First is logical knowledge through the mind; second is non-conceptual and direct knowledge of things by intuition; and third is the highest stage when all truths

are known and mind and intuition are destroyed. *Purusa* shines in its own light, dissociated from *Prakrti*, and without any means of normal or intuitive consciousness.

The *Purusa's* aim is not to merge in God, or to have any union with Him. After release from the bondage of life, it remains in complete isolation. In this state *Purusa* is unconscious in regard to the universe.[8] The freedom sought is freedom from the world, which had meant a suffering and involvement in all activities of the mind. These alone caused the bondage and loss of freedom. All activity, as in other dualistic systems, has to be stopped. It is *Avidya*, or wrong thinking, which leads to involvement in life. The *Purusa* must break the hold of the mind and feel that things and activities of the world are not his own. *Budhi* is an unconscious activity of *Prakrti* and is not a feature of *Purusa*. The ego-self (*Ahankara*) arises from the three *Gunas*, and all psychic activity is mechanical. After *Purusa's* state of *Kaivalya* or complete isolation, there is eternal unconsciousness of *Purusa*. It is an isolation with a view to non-return.

Evidently, for the *Jivanmukta* the ideal is of non-involvement in the world. True, the system is not so ascetic as in the case of Jainism, but other ideals and the approach remain the same. All spiritual effort is individual. Even the final release is obtained purely by personal efforts and God's help is normally not sought. The ultimate aim is stoppage of all consciousness and a condition of complete isolation and passivity. Like other dualistic systems, Yoga belongs to the class of Isolation mysticism.

We have detailed the Yogic method and approach because, as a meditational or spiritual practice, it has been owned or adopted by many other mystic systems. It is important to point out that, if any mystic system accepts Yogic methods as a means or aid to the achievement of its goals, there will, on that account, be clear and significant implications. For this acceptance will involve a marked influence on its entire approach and attitude to life.

Dualistic Systems

We have dealt with the three dualistic-cum-pluralistic systems of Jainism, Sankhya and Yoga. Before we proceed further a few general observations would be pertinent. It is now accepted by all that when the Aryans came to India, they had to contend with a local culture, older and, in a way, more advanced than that of the Aryans. Jainism is the last historically known religious system that is still a part of that Indian heritage. Lord Mahavira was the last

and the twenty-fourth Tirthankara of the Jains. He lived in the 6th century B.C. At least one other Tirthankara, Lord Parsvanatha, the twenty-third Tirthankara, and quite possibly another one too, were historical figures. Lord Parsvanatha lived in the 9th century B.C.[9] This hoary and independent heritage is also borne out by the fact that the Jain system is completely free from the idea of God, and there is also no place for rituals with which all young religious systems are generally associated. Secondly, it is a religion, which perhaps, having lost interest in the struggles of life, has practically turned its back to the world. The *Purusa* has to be wholly clear of all *Karmas* and activity. The object is of final isolation and non-return to the mortal world despite entreaties and prayers from the suffering people below. The means and practices of release recommended are extreme and tortuous forms of asceticism. It is very doubtful whether this ascetic and other-worldly culture could at all be the introvert off-spring of the system of the vigorous and extrovert Aryan invaders who revelled in the joys of life and whose religion was full of rites and sacrifices made to gods so as to obtain all kinds of mundane gifts, benefits and victories in this world. Zimmer writes : "The Tirthankaras, represent the resurgence of a world view totally different from the triumphant cattle-herders and warlike horsemen who had entered India from the trans-Himalayan plains and whose way of life had swept all before it for nearly a thousand years. The Vedas, like the hymns of the Homeric Greeks, were the productions of a consciousness dedicated to the spheres of action, whereas the figures of the Tirthankaras stand as the most vivid expressions in all art of the ideal of the world-negating, absolute refusal of life's lure. Here is no bending of the cosmic forces to the will of man, but on the contrary, a relentless shelling off of cosmic forces, whether those of the external universe, or those of the pulse in the running of the blood."[10] It is not our object to settle the issue of cultural lineage, but all we wish to indicate is the presence in this country, near about the 9th century B.C., of two entirely contrasted streams of religious thought. One of them believed in a fixed dualism and plurality of *Purusas* with the ideal of extricating, by ascetic means and efforts, the entangled *Purusa* from the painful meshes of *Prakrti*. The other had a deep faith in polytheism or henotheism, veering round to monism, and in the efficacy of rituals, *Mantras* and sacrifices made to secure material favours and benefits for the human struggle and enjoyment in the world.[11]

Whether the reason for this kind of attitude, approach and

ideals in the Sramanic tradition was the weariness of the psyche or the excessive rigour of the struggle against the harsh and hostile environment, or the dualistic character of the doctrine which logically involved the rescue of the spiritual element from its entanglement with *Prakrti*, the fact remained that the overall attitude, by any definition, was negative towards life and the world. It is enough here to signify and emphasise the presence of these systems and trends in the country. It is also not in doubt that this general approach to life and the goal of the Dualistic-Isolation mysticism became a regular feature of the Indian spiritual life and of all subsequent religious systems in the country.

3

Vedic System[1]

It is necessary now first to take up Vedic mysticism with which the second line of religious system develops in India. Obviously Vedic mysticism is Aryan. In India this religion started with the *Rig Veda* and the other *Vedas*, including the Brahmanas. Normally, this ritualistic and sacrificial religion should not fall within the definition of mysticism. But, since the assumption is that Vedic knowledge is non-rational and non-sensory, the system has been called a mysticism by Dasgupta.

The fundamental *Veda*, the *Rig Veda*, contains about 1028 hymns mainly addressed to a number of deities, the chief being Indra. Generally, these deities represent different powers of nature like rain, fire, wind, sun, etc. Most of these prayers are for material benefits like long life, cattle, horses, gold, victory over adversaries, etc. The *Brahmanas*, or prose texts containing explanations of Vedic *Mantras* were composed shortly after the hymns. They were appended to them, forming a part of the Veda, which they interpret authoritatively. They are not mere commentaries, but expound the system. It is *Brahmanas* that show the value and place of the various hymns in the ritualistic system. They prescribe the particular hymns to be used, the conditions, manner and order of the ritualistic observances, and sacrifices and the benefits they bestow. Thus, the prevailing form of Vedic religion was the system of rituals and sacrifices as prescribed in the hymns and of the connected notes called the *Brahmanas*. For their performances, many of these rituals needed the help and services of numerous priests. Large quantities of materials like butter, rice, animals etc., were used to complete the rituals, sometimes extending over days and months. Prescribed details had to be observed in the most exact and scrupulous manner. Even the most trivial and insignificant error in accent, modulation or pronunciation, or variation from any specified detail, could spoil or distort the entire effect of the sacrifice. Under the system, benefits accrued not from the prayers

or the deity, but entirely from the correct observance of the rituals. In practice, the system stressed the unfailing efficacy and primacy of the sacrifice. By accurate performance of the ritual the gods were compelled to grant the gifts. The material advantage sought was bound to accrue despite even the ill-will of the god to whom the hymns had been addressed. The sacrificial rituals, correctly performed, could produce everything on earth and in heaven that man desired.

These sacrificial rites embody supernatural wisdom and are self-existent. The *Vedas*, including *Brahmanas* expounding the sacrificial ritualism, are self-revealed and self-created. They are eternal, and prescribe orders and prohibitory commands. They have no commander, God, or author who issued them. While facts and events described in the hymns have no religious significance, their entire value is ritualistic so as to secure material advantage to man and to prescribe for him the course of action. These hymns have nothing of what is normally understood by religion.[2] There are no prayers to a personal God or a deity for spiritual or other benefits. No such god, or God is assumed. The *Vedas* and *Brahmanas* are deemed to be uncreated, self-existent, eternal and transcendent. They contain secret, cosmic and mystic laws of nature. These hymns and rituals are beyond reason and logic. They have omniscient formulae of wisdom. They prescribe secret and mystic laws of nature which cannot be understood rationally. In this lies their mysticism. They have only to be accepted and followed. Originally, the word *Dharma* meant sacrifices or their powers. It would thus be wrong to understand the word *Dharma* to mean religion. The Vedic hymns and *Brahmanas* assume no author or controller of the universe. There is no God who has to be obeyed, loved or prayed to or who shows his grace. The system helps us to control and make our own future. The *Vedas* cannot be comprehended as they are beyond human understanding and reason. All benefits could be obtained by rituals, but these were not blessings from God. It is these impersonal commands, and not God, that require our obedience.

It is this ritualistic or sacrificial mysticism of the *Vedas* which has remained in vogue, and which has been enjoined and practised scrupulously, for hundreds of years since its origin. Apparently, the hymns are prayers and outpourings of primitive and simple people impressed by the forces of nature. These were addressed to nature gods of rain, sun, etc. But for the purpose of rituals, these very verses were torn from different and unrelated contexts so as to

constitute the *Mantras* or the ritual formulae. In order to obtain the desired benefits these disjointed verses, without any bearing on the concerned issue or rational sequence, were combined and chanted for the various sacrifices as prescribed in the *Vedas*.

The Vedic system required complete obedience without question. The *Vedas* were the ultimate, infallible and the only source of knowledge, mystic or the rest. They involved neither feeling nor intellect. One had to submit blindly to these impersonal commands so as to master nature and obtain all kinds of benefits here and hereafter. These Vedic commands and rituals are not spiritual truths, nor are those from God. They are eternal tools since self-revealed to man. They require his complete obedience. They are not from inside man. They are transcendent and unchallengeable by reason. Thus, human reason is downgraded and divested of its ability to find the mysteries of nature. This mysticism asserts that reason cannot be true. Accordingly, as a truth finder reason has been discarded. No new idea or change could be right or valid unless it had the sanction of the *Vedas*.

Next came the stage of improvising the sacrifices. Instead of actually doing the sacrifices, one only did meditation, or contemplation. These meditations could also give the same results as the sacrifices. One had to meditate continuously on one entity or a letter. In this line arose the worship of sun; an image or a stone representing a deity. Here also a meaningless combination of words, or a *Mantra*, was used for meditation. The mystical power now came to be in the meditation or *Mantra* which could create mysterious changes in nature. All the same the old sacrificial system also continued.

In the context of rituals, arose the idea of *Brahman*. Finally, it indicated the great force behind these sacrifices and the entire sacrificial system. But, there was no worship of *Brahman*, it being no personal God that could be approached, prayed to or worshipped. Nor could Brahman be reached by thought or feeling. There were manuals of substituted meditations in the *Aranyakas*. Vedic mysticism gave power and authority to the priests, the sole performer of rituals and to the system of sacrifices and rituals, including the method of substituted meditations. It gave unquestioned pre-eminence and omniscience to *Vedas* but not to God or gods. So much so that like other benefits, even virtues could be gained or attained by the system of sacrifices or substituted meditations. Before we close the description, we give a gist of the system in the words of Dasgupta.

"The main elements of the sacrificial mysticism of the *Vedas* may be summarised as follows : First, a belief that the sacrifices when performed with perfect accuracy, possess a secret, mysterious power to bring about or produce as their effect whatever we may desire either in this life or in the hereafter. Second, the conception of an unalterable law—involved is such invariable and unfailing occurrences of effects consequent upon the performance of these sacrifices. Third, an acceptance of the impersonal nature of the Vedic literature, as having existed by itself from the beginning of time and as not created or composed by any person human or divine. Fourth, the view that the Vedic literature embodies nothing but a system of duties involving commands and prohibitions. Fifth, a recognition of the supreme authority of the *Vedas* as the only source of the knowledge of ultimate truths which are far beyond the powers of human reason. Sixth, the view that truth or reality whether it be of the nature of commands or of facts (as was maintained by the later Vedic schools of thought, the ***Upanisads)***, could be found once for all in the words of the *Vedas*. Seventh, the belief that the Vedic system of duties demands unfailing obedience and submission. Two definite characteristics emerge from these : First, the transcendent, mysterious and secret power of the sacrifices," "second, the ultimate superiority of the *Vedas* as the source of all truths, and as the unchallengeable dictators of our duties." "There is nothing here of feeling or even of intellect, but a blind submission, not to a person, but to an impersonal authority which holds within it an unalterable and inscrutable law, the secret of all powers."[3]

The reason for our detailing Vedic mysticism is that to all subsequent orthodox religious systems and mysticisms, it gave clear colour and direction, especially because all of them accepted the scriptural authority of the *Vedas* and the system prescribed therein. In fact, no system could be called orthodox unless it gave complete and unquestioned obedience to the *Vedas*. The Vedic system gave definite character and shape to all subsequent systems which could work only within its overall framework.

In the Vedic times logical thinking only laid down "crude generalisations". The *Vedas* do not presume a God as the creator of the universe. They alone are eternal, inviolable and all-powerful. The world is real and the goal of life is to have good things in this world and in heaven after death. All these could be secured by resort to sacrificial, ritualistic and meditational practices. The literate man was more powerful and virtuous or moral than the

illiterate one because virtue and power could be gained by sacrifices. The *Vedas* prescribe definite commands, and prohibitions, including the sanctioning of caste divisions, and distinctions. All these directions and prohibitions demand strict obedience because of the spiritual, mystic and infallible character of the *Vedas.* These caste distinctions and other commands became the fundamental basis of all the later religious, social and ethical systems. No orthodox system had the least chance of survival unless it accepted the unquestioned authority of the *Vedas* and their system of commands as mentioned above. It is very significant to note that for over 700 years after the issue of the Vedic hymns, i.e., upto the time of *Upanisads,* the above mystical religion and the interpretation given therein remained in unquestioned practice in the orthodox field.

To interpret the hymns of the *Vedas* by their literal meaning would not be appropriate since those were beyond human understanding and scrutiny. Yet from the literal point of view the hymns were addressed to the powers of nature and the system could be called polytheistic or a form of nature worship. The chief Vedic God was Indra to whom the largest number, about twenty-five per cent, of the hymns were addressed. Admittedly, Indra was a God who was known for his moral laxity. He is the most popular God of the *Vedas,* probably because he was a protector of the Aryans, the bestower of rain, and the destroyer of the dark skin[4]. There are a few hymns which would suggest that there was one power behind all the gods : "What is but one, wise people call by different names."[5] But this idea of Brahman indicated no God but just the great power underlying the sacrificial system. The plurality of souls was assumed. *Purva-Mimansa* is the system expounding the above ritualistic view of the *Vedas.* Kumarila Bhatta,who lived in 700 A.D., is its cheif exponent. He recognises no God. For him *Vedas* and *Vedas* alone are supreme, final and eternal. They determine *Dharma.* In this system *Upanisads* are given a subordinate position to that of *Vedas.* The Vedic Aryans had a clear zest for life. The sacrifices were done to win gods and compel them to bestow material benefits and advantages to man. The highest aim of life was heaven after death. In view of the injunctions for the graded caste system, monotheistic ideas of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man leading to human equality as the basis for all social, moral and spiritual development, could not arise, being incongruous with the mystic commands.

Actually, in the normal sense of the words, the Vedic system

is neither a religion nor a system of mysticism. It is not a religion since it involves no relationship of worship, devotion or the like between man and a divine power. It is not mysticism because it is not an approach or attempt on the part of the seeker to have some kind of an experience of God or Brahman. Modern scholars suggest that it is just the introduction of the magical elements into the field of religion, and indicates 'the transfer of power from the gods to the priests'. There is no doubt that belief in magic was widely current in the period, as shown by the *Atharva Veda*, which is mainly a 'book of sorcery and witchcraft'.[6]

We have defined mysticism as the extra-sensory experience of man. In this sense, Vedic mysticism in no mysticism because it pertains to the self-revealed mysticism which man cannot experience or understand. It only demands his obedience. Obviously, this mysticism does not fit in the classification we started with. Dasgupta calls it Ritualistic or Sacrificial mysticism.

In order really to understand and appreciate later mystic growths in the country, the import and implications of Vedic mysticism have to be kept in view, since all orthodox mystic systems accept the validity and authority of this mysticism. The differences and disputes, relate only to their interpretations of the *Vedas*. But, there could never be a repudiation of the Vedic system or the *Vedas* as such. The thesis given in the *Vedas* is inviolable and infallible.

Hiriyanna says that from the *Upanisads* downwards, it is the characteristic of all Indian systems, that they never discard the old but accept it as an integral part of the new. In fact, the new includes all the essentials of the old and earlier systems fully reconciled to the new. This trait, besides enabling the old system to absorb and assimilate new or heterogeneous growths, maintained the supremacy and continuity of the original system. The Vedic mysticism thus, remained always fundamental to the subsequent systems. The system reveals the secrets of the cosmos and the incapacity of reason to apprehend or comprehend these mystic forces of the universe. This Vedic system subsequently gave rise to the other religious and mystic systems in the country, and continues to have unquestioned validity. Two points are essential for the proper understanding of all orthodox systems in the country. Firstly, that all orthodox systems accepted wholeheartedly the validity of Vedic mysticism, and secondly, that it is the above interpretation of Vedic mysticism that has been accepted as authoritative and authentic. This system was practised continuously

for hundreds of years after the time the Vedic hymns had been revealed. Even uptil the time of the *Upanisads*, the fundamental character of this view had never been questioned by any orthodox school. It is, therefore, natural to assume that whatever be the subsequent accretions to the system, the original view was true and authentic. Among the orthodox exponents, Sankra is the only person who gives secondary importance to this view of Vedic mysticism. But, he too accepts its validity and the unquestioned authority of the *Vedas*. Hence the fundamental importance of this mysticism in understanding all the later orthodox mystic systems and developments.

4

Upanisadic System[1]

Apart from its mystic ritualism, the Vedic religion is clearly polytheistic, because its gods are only the personifications of the forces of nature. Monotheism in the strict sense of the creator being different from the creation is virtually absent. The adoration or the separate worship of different gods being absent, their independent value and entity were there only because the verses addressed to them were, sometimes mutilated and torn out of their context, uttered and chanted in connection with the sacrifices and the rituals. Though strong pantheistic verses about *Prajapati* being all and everything are also there, the emphasis is entirely on ritualism.

Before we consider the thesis of the *Upanisads* it is necessary to bear in mind an important fact about them. *Upanisad* literally means "secret teaching". *Upanisads* generally record the stray thoughts of sages, hermits and forest dwellers. It was a teaching meant for the select few. It was imparted in private to the pupils of only tried character. Unlike the *Vedas*, Vaisnavism, Saivism, Buddhism, Jainism and other religions, the *Upanisads* did not lay down a system meant for one and all. They comprised a teaching meant only for an elite, a small section of people, many of whom had withdrawn themselves to the seclusion of the forest. They represent the variant and unreconciled views of different sages as expressed by them from time to time. It seems to be a development similar to the one among those hermits who took to *Yoga* as a means to power and peace of mind. The *Upanisads* never sought to evolve and preach a new or a homogeneous religious system. That also accounts for the variations between the earlier *Upanisads*, and the subsequent ones which were recorded many centuries later. Of the later *Upanisads*, Hiriyanna writes that these had practically accepted the earlier Vedic thoughts, including its rituals and social commands. These aspects of the matter need to be kept in view while understanding the thought of the *Upanisads* as recorded below.

The real search for Brahman, as against the Brahman being the power or the essence of sacrificial rituals, started only in the *Upanisad* period. The Vedic Brahman was wholly concerned with the mundane desires for the benefits of life. But, in the *Upanisads*, there is a spiritual craving for immortality that distinguishes the outlook of the sages from that of the early Aryans who cared only for the things of the world.[2] We cannot say why the pendulum swung in the opposite direction. But, it did move. This search is for an immortal identity with the Self or Brahman. When this stage of supra-consciousness (Prajnana) is reached, all empirical experiences are dissolved in this infinite and limitless homogeneous experience. Connected with this consciousness of a deep dreamless sleep is the stage where all duality vanishes and the subject-object relation is lost. Along with it the inner vision of everything is gained. There is no trace of duality and we have a blissful experience. There is none who knows, nor the one that is known. This ineffable experience, in relieving oneself of all separate experiences, comprehends them all. Normally, we miss the reality underlying the external world. This intuitional experience is ineffable. It reveals itself only to an awakened supra-consciousness.[3] With the knowledge of it everything else becomes known. It is likened to the rivers flowing into the sea and losing their identity. In it one cannot be distinct. All divergent things lose their seprate knowledge and identity when they are merged in this Being or the Reality from which they have come out. Another simile given is of the oak seed which is dissected reveals nothing of the big oak tree which springs from it.[4] It is the chief feature of Upanisadic mysticism that the fundamental Reality is not personal. It is not like God of the theists to whom we pray and devote ourselves with love, He being seperate from us. It is nothing of that kind. The sages speak of this experience as undifferentiated. The basic Truth or Reality is the Whole, of which all things are a part.[5] Brahman has become the universe and everything in it. *Tattvamasi* (thou art that) and again '*Aham brahmasmi*' (I am Brahman) enunciate the cardinal principle in the *Upanisads* that indicates their pantheistic character. These statements can mean both spirituals and even material identity. The cosmic principle can be material too. In the *Upanisads* are passages indicating that: (a) in the beginning the world was a non-being, thereby giving the basis for constructing a materialism; (b) Brahman alone is real and the world is illusory and an appearance only, furnishing thereby the ground for Sankara's Vedanta; and (c) everything came out of

the same seed and is a part of the one whole, thereby leading to pantheism. In fact, materialism, pantheism, monism, Sankara's Advaita and Ramanuj's Vishisht Advaita, all have an apparently justifiable basis in the *Upanisads*.[6] Brahman is the totality of a partless, simple whole. *Atman* is the essence and source of the cosmos and also the base of all supra-conscious and undifferentiated experience.

There is a belief in a superior principle which enlightens life and thought. The spiritual goal is for the realisation of that true essence which is immortal in itself. Only those who have a disinclination for worldly enjoyments could, by intuition, realise this Reality and merge in it. Whatever be the theistic indications in the *Upanisads*, the fundamental and the underlying concept is of "Thou art that" and "I am Brahman". Brahman is not separate from us, everything is a part of it, or an emanation from it. The final aim is, therefore, of merger and other-worldliness. Even *Yajavalkya*, the chief sage of Birhadaranyaka Upanisad, ultimately felt that one should leave the world and his family to seek salvation. It is only the realised person who can point out to us an experience which is self-illuminating, blissful and entirely ineffable. It can be grasped only by a intuitive or a non-rational contact with Reality. Our essence is never born and never dies. For some this knowledge is cognitive. It can only be known by the person who realises his self to be identical with the Highest Principle. For him death, and power sink into insignificance and illusory nothingness. The world is an appearance only.

There is another line of thought in the *Upanisads*. According to it Brahman appears as a Supreme Being from whom everything has proceeded and who is the soul of all energy. He is the source of everything, the mind and life of everything, and the thought of all thought. He cannot be grasped by the senses and the mind. The *Katha Upanisad* says that He is the Great Life from which all else comes into being; He is the Creator and controller of the Universe.[7] The ideas appear anomalous for He too is the world. Here Brahman is described in seemingly theistic terms; but, the basic concept even here remains pantheistic, namely, that the world is an emanation or a part of Brahman. It is He who has become the visible universe of diverse names and forms. There are passages where Brahman is mentioned as having spread himself into everything and formed all that exists. This might even be considered as a negation of spirituality and a form of materialism.[8] This is contradictory to the idea of Brahman being the Creator and

Controller. Ideas about materialism, dualism and a God could also be deduced. And yet it is not a God of the theist, because all symbolic descriptions, like those of rivers losing identity in the sea, of Brahman being the source of all energy and everything, of the oak seed spreading out into an oak tree, of the Whole without parts and of everything merging in Brahman and losing individuality, raise entirely a pantheistic picture and concept about Brahman.

The *Katha Upanisad* says that he "who perceives diversity in this world suffers the death of all deaths". One who knows Brahman escapes death, and that from One form He becomes many.[9] Admittedly, *Upanisads*, and sometimes the same *Upanisads*, contain conflicting and contradictory concepts and thought system without any attempt at reconciling those divergencies. Evidently, *Upanisads* are mere compilations of different ideas as have occurred to the various sages following their experiences. They do not contain a unified thought system.[10] That is why different and opposing schools try to support and base their theories on writings from the same *Upanisads*. Some even contend that Brahman alone exists and the rest is all false and illusory. While the *Upanisads* do not propound only one or a consistent form of philosophy, it is clear that, except for stray divergencies leading to contradictory thoughts, without any attempt to create a coherent or independent concept, the main thought of the *Upanisads* is either pantheistic or monistic. It is this thought which Gaudapada and Sankara subsequently expounded in their monistic philosophy of the world not being real but illusory.[11] Final knowledge is gained intuitively (*Prajanana*) and not by cognition (Jnana). Hiriyanna concludes that the dominant thought of *Upanisads* is absolutistic or monistic.

The next question is the way to gain this intuition. Brahman is revealed only when our minds turn away from all desires and ties of the outside world, and when one does meditation. Only those can have this experience who do no sinful action, control their desires, and are at peace with themselves. After this preparatory stage, meditation is recommended. The *Upanisads* say that Truth is known through purity and meditation. It was after the end of the Vedic period that the *Brahmanas* prescribed as an integral part of the discipline revealed social order the ideal of four *Ashramas*—the first of studentship, the second of the householder, the third of *Vanprastha* and departure to the forest, and the fourth of a *Bhikshu*, an ascetic monk, in search of identity with Brahman. The mystic objective was to be achieved in the last two stages,

when all thoughts of the present and all links with the delusive secular life were to be abjured as bondage.[12] Ultimately, it has to be a hermit's or *Sanyasin's* life, away from the world. This stage of intuition is reached by effort, practice and meditation, and not as a boon or gift of the gods, nor by sacrificial practices. Ultimately, one can come in touch with Brahman and can enter it or realise that One is Brahman. But, one must give up all desires by which one is bound to the world. When one reaches this Reality, one is lost like a river in the sea. Nothing remains of man by which he could feel as a separate individual. He is one with Brahman. This is achieved only when one's senses stop moving and the mind stops working. "No one can describe what this existence is. One can only say that it is 'being', nothing more."[13] But, one is merged, identical with Brahman, alien and dead to the world of senses. Nothing is left of the man. This is the final stage and state of the *Jivanmukta*. As such, he has no role to play in life. He becomes indifferent to all action, whether good or evil."[14]

According to Sankara, Vedic mysticism is the lower truth (*apara vidya*). The higher truth (*para vidya*) is that given in the *Upanisads*. *Apara vidya* is just preparatory. Naturally, Sankara's difficulty is that he cannot disown the *Vedas* and their authority. He has, therefore, to include them in his system as the preliminary stage. His view we shall deal with separately. There is another view about the *Upanisads*. It is "the doctrine of a self-evolving Brahman (*Brahama-parinamavada*)"[15] of Bhartrprapanca which is monistic.

The goal in the *Upanisads* is the enlightened state in Brahman, or *Moksa* from the empirical world. This goal of release, according to Sankara, means that the self remains by itself, partless and peaceful. According to others, it is only a sense of diversity that ultimately disappears. The All-Comprehensive Reality is experienced as identical with oneself. In either case, in this state of perfection, the distinction of self and non-self, and of good and evil, is transcended. This conception of the *Jivanmukta* is an advance over the earlier Vedic belief which involved heaven only after death. It is a liberation from the condition of worldly existence. The apparently theistic statements in *Upanisads* do mention of the Creator. But, this Creator is no different from the created. He is the efficient and the material cause of the world and the conception becomes pantheistic or absolutistic. It needs to be noted that whereas in a few *Upanisads* there is criticism of Vedic ritualism, ultimately, the *Upanisads* accepted the Vedic thought and

caste. They became a part of the overall Vedic system and gained scriptural authority as a part of the *Vedas*.

In conclusion, it is evident that *Upanisad* mysticism is primarily monistic, a mysticism of merger or identity. It is very akin to Isolation mysticism.

5

Vedanta[1]

We have already seen that the *Upanisads* are a compilation of variant strains of thought, and all subsequent religious systems, even opposed to each other, have tried to build up their ideas on the basis and support of the *Upanisads*. For our purpose, it is necessary to consider the two principle mystic systems, one of Sankara and the other of Ramanuja, both of whom derive their scriptural authority from the *Upanisads*. The latter we shall deal with under Vaisnavism. The mystic system of Sankara is admittedly monistic or absolutistic. Gaudapada and Sankara are the two chief exponents of it. The former writes : "The manifold universe does not exist as a form of reality, nor does it exist of itself." "Sages....see the Self to be devoid of imagination, change, or conception, as causing all phenomena to cease and is devoid of duality. Having attained to non-duality, one should behave in the world like an insensible object." "Seeing the truth in respect of himself and of the external world, having himself become of the nature of truth, taking his pleasure in it, he will never depart from the truth."[2] Zaehner believes that this final state (*Turiya*) of unqualified absoluteness is akin to the dreamless sleep. It is like the eighth and final state of release in Buddhism, which is 'neither of consciousness, nor of non-consciousness,' with 'cessation of perception and feeling'.[3]

Under this system Brahman is the sole reality which is non-dual. All diversity according to Sankara is false (*Mithya*). As in the classical example of a rope appearing a serpent, the latter has no reality. Similarly, all diversity of the world is an illusory appearance, and the sole underlying reality is Brahman. Consequently, to move in the world, while accepting the reality of the phenomenal existence, is sheer ignorance or *Avidya*. The aim of life is to realize the truth of the underlying Brahman and to deny the world. But in life we are not conscious of this truth. The individual self is a part of that Brahman, and is not, to that extent, false, while the

world is illusory. After a person becomes conscious of this position, he becomes a *Jivanmukta*. It is possible to achieve this stage in this life. In this state he is a part of Brahman and loses all his limitations which are false. Thus, Brahman, being the sole reality, appears both as an individual being and the diverse universe, which is entirely illusory. The individual being in not illusory like the world, but it works under limitations which are also false and illusory like the world. Another consequence of this view is that all change is a mere transformation without any ultimate significance, thereby demolishing all primary validity of moral life in this world. As such, all relation of Brahman with the empirical world is denied. It is neither its efficient nor its material cause. Hence all causation, change, movement and direction in the empirical world lose any meaning or value. All changes are illusory. They are not changes of Brahman, or the underlying Reality. Birth and death are also unreal and illusory. Hence the following *Mantram* of Sankara : "I am not born; how can there be either birth or death for me ?" "I am neither male nor female, nor am I sexless. I am the Peaceful One, whose form is self-effulgent, powerful radiance. I am neither a child, a young man, nor an ancient; nor am I of any caste. I do not belong to one of the four life-stages. I am the Blessed-Peaceful One, who is the only cause of the origin and dissolution of the world."[4] The changes or transformations in the world are taken on the lines of the Sankhya-Yoga, with the exception that those changes are not of an eternal *Prakrti*, nor of Brahman, but only of an inexplicable *Maya* or *Prakrti* which is neither real nor unreal, nor related to Brahman. Only *Jiva*, without its limitations and apparent individuality, is identical with Brahman. It is Brahman. It is Brahman with a limiting adjunct. But, *Jiva* too is neither born nor dies, nor exists empirically, nor undergoes any change. The Brahman and *Maya* can each be represented as the cause of the world. Their blend or combination becomes *Saguna* Brahman or *Ishvara*, comprehending all the diversity of experience, including the experiencing selves. In this sense Brahman, like *Maya*, may be conceived in two stages as the cause and the effect. In the former diversity is latent, whereas in the latter it is manifest. In combination with false *Maya*, Brahman descends to the empirical world and this is the lower (*Apara*) Brahman compared to the higher (*Para*) Brahman. The *Saguna* Brahman (*Ishvara*) is the Cosmic Self corresponding to the individual self. Each of these is Brahman and has an unreal adjunct. The adjunct is all-comprehensive in one case, and, finite (*Avidya*) in the case of the

individual self. God remains untouched by any of the evil consequences like love and hate of association with finite adjuncts. It is attachment which implies preferences. God with the power of *Maya* becomes the Creator of the universe. In a way, He also becomes the material and efficient cause of the world. He is thus a Great Magician. He, like the magician, is not deluded by the illusion of manifestation He makes. The ultimate goal is the Absolute or Brahman, and not God or *Saguna* or qualified Brahman. All methods of worship and devotion are fruitless. This path of devotion and the ideal of God are for persons of poor intellect. It can only be a stepping stone for the path to Brahman. In itself all devotion is illusory. Sankara writes : "the entire realm of duality including the object and the act of devotion is illusory." "Such a *Jiva,* that is the aspirant betaking itself to devotion, inasmuch as it knows only a partial aspect of Brahman, is called of narrow or poor intellect by those who regard Brahman as eternal and unchanging." Again, he says, "this discipline", that is the discipline of worship, "as well as the various (sacrificial and moral) works are prescribed by the scripture for the aspirants of low and average intellect out of compassion, so that they also, following the correct disciplines, may attain to the superior knowledge. That this discipline is not for those who possess the right understanding,"[5] *Jiva* or the ego is a combination of self and not-self, non-real adjuncts or *Avidya. Maya* is the adjunct in the case of *Saguna* (qualified) Brahman. Man truly to be himself must get beyond himself. In Sankhya-Yoga, the *Jiva* or *Purusa* remains aloof, and the ideal is to maintain the aloofness, and withdraw from its combination with *Prakrti.* Similarly, in the *Advaits* of Sankara, withdrawal is from the illusory adjuncts of *Maya.* This return to supra-conscious aloofness in the case of Sankhya-Yoga is like the realisation of Brahman or the transcendent ego. According to *Advaita* all variety is finally false. It is just an appearance. The Advaitin, unlike Mimamsaka, holds that the author of Vedas is God, but it is not his work. It disappears at the end of a cycle, reappearing again in the next cycle. In one sense it is eternal like God and is independent of God.

The aim of life is to get rid of all false adjuncts and of the identification of the self with the false empirical world. The method to do so is by right knowledge. The important thing is that for that purpose the change has to be in the realm of thought and not in the realm of being. In order to be free, one has only to alter his attitude to the world. The final change is not in the nature of the

self which is unchangeable. One is Brahman already, only the position has to be realised in experience. The method for this achievement of liberation from the empirical world is two-fold. The first part is *Vairagya*, or dissociating oneself from the world, while doing the duty of one's station in life, i.e., the caste duties. The mystic achievement can be made only by him who is a Sanyasin, or renouncer of the world,[6] who gives up all works, good or bad, and who is unwilling to accept even the grace of God. The actual change is of one's viewpoint and not is one's nature. While in the other systems ethical work contributes directly to one's growth, here the aid of ethical action is, for evident reasons, only indirect, because actually the empirical world is really an illusion. Vedic *Karma* or ritualistic mysticism is accepted as helpful but only to gain heaven. Morality is only a remote aid to *Moksa*, because doing one's duty has no meaning in reality. Of course, discrimination between the transient and the eternal, the absence of desires, a tranquil attitude and a desire for liberation have to be cultivated. The general belief is that, as was planned by *Yajnavalkya*, the final stage is achieved while one is a *Sanyasin*. It is seen that in this discipline the so-called ethical duties have only a negative value. There is no positive moral action because that would be moving in a wrong direction, and, in fact, be an involvement. Hence the remote value of all moral action.[7] The Upanisadic discipline of Vedic study, reflection and meditation has to be practised. The reason for meditation is that, despite intellectual understanding, one's psychic habits have to be cured by meditation. Finally one realises "Thou Art that." Though the realisation is merely of an intellectual truth and a comprehension, there has to be an experience also, i.e., a revelation of scriptural knowledge is necessary. But it is not final in securing liberation. It is like an intuition (*Anubhava*). At that time one does not merely know Brahman, nor is there a union, but one becomes or, in fact, is Brahman. This *Jivanmukta* is in life, but, in a way, out of it. After death he is freed finally. *Jivanmukta* has no role to play, for Gaudapada says that one should behave in life as an "insensible object". Sacrificial *Karma* of the Vedic pattern secures a position which in a future life can give final liberation.

A few words of clarification in this regard are necessary, because Vedantic mysticism is generally deemed to be the epitome of Indian thought, religions and mystic life. Readers must already have observed a marked similarity in the approach, the goal, the general conceptions, and the disciplines to be adopted, between

Advaita and Sankhya-Yoga. The difference is that while in Sankhya-Yoga *Prakrti* is eternal, here the material world is only an illusory formation of *Maya*. Here too the *Jiva*, a part of Brahman, is in combination with the false empirical adjuncts of *Maya*, which in Sankhya-Yoga are the transformations of *Prakrti*. Here too, as in Sankhya-Yoga, the liberation of the *Jiva* has to be secured from the false empirical adjuncts. In both cases the eternal *Jiva* or *Purusa* is virtually inactive and non-participating in the changes of the empirical world. These take place outside him and without affecting him. Again, in both cases the final goal is the non-active liberation of the *Jiva* or *Purusa* from involvements of the empirical world. Like *Purusa's* shining in its own light, here too is a realisation of one's being a part of Brahman. He is completely liberated from the illusory world or *Prakrti* or the world of activity or morality, the relevance of which for early training is also indirect and remote. As such, neither worldly life, nor its social or political activities, have any value or significance. In fact, the final stage, as in the discipline of *Upanisads*, is of the fourth *Ashram* or of *a Sanyasin*. Another similarity is that while the final realisation is mystic, intuitive or revelatory, the general approach is predominantly intellectual and contemplative. Though theoretically Sankhya and Yoga systems are dualistic and Vedanta is monistic, in effect and in practice they are extremely identical in their conceptions, approach, ethics and other-worldliness. Moral life has no ultimate significance.[8] The idea of God being a lower stage, has to be transcended finally; for 'God' is only the most subtle, most magnificent, most flattering false impression of all in this general spectacle of erroneous self-deceptions."[9] While this mysticism concedes the authority of the *Vedas*, it clearly emphasises that both Vedic mysticism and theistic mysticism of God (*Ishvara*) are lower mystic stages meant for commoners or weak persons, who do not want to reach the highest stage, and are either content with lower benefits, or are not yet equipped or ripe enough for the higher life.

We have made clear the answers given by this most important mystic system to the seven questions raised earlier. Without doubt, this mysticism belongs to the class of Monistic or Isolation mysticisms.

6

Vaisnavism[1]

Vaisnavism has an extremely chequered history. The ancient systems of India were either dualistic, involving a multiplicity of *Purusas* without the concept of God in the theistic sense, or were ritualistic (Vedic), without the concept of a commander issuing the Vedic commands. In the Upanisadic system Brahman was conceived primarily in the monistic or in the pantheistic sense. The predominant view which was Vedantic (Advaita of Sankara) envisaged that the world was not real. In this system naturally there was no place of devotion or a system of love as contemplated in a theism with a God of Attributes. As against it in the Vedic system everything including heaven could be obtained by the performance of rituals and sacrifices. In such a climate and age, the growth of a system of worship and devotion could come only by the flow of a side stream and not as indigenous to the Vedic system itself. As an independent mystic system, with doctrines and a philosophy of its own, it crystallised mainly in the post Sankara period, especially when the Alvar saints appeared in the south and other Vaisnava saints came up in the north, the east and the west of India. In order to understand the content and import of the Vaisnava system, it is necessary briefly to trace its long history.

It is now commonly believed that originally four streams of thought joined to form the early Vaisnava system of the pre-Christian era. Probably, the oldest of them was the worship of Vasudeva who was the God of a tribe called *Vrsni*. As would be expected from the author of an opposing creed, the Buddhistic text referring to the worship of Vasudeva mentions it along with over half a dozen other minor systems of worship, including the worship of a cow, a horse, an elephant, a crow, etc. Vasudeva was a member of the *Vrsni* race or *Satvatas*. This system with other accretions was called the *Bhagavata* system.

The second stream of thought was connected with the name of Narayana, who is mentioned as a God in the Vedic system. Nara,

Narayana, Hari, sons of Dharma, are referred as forms of the Supreme. But, apart from reference to them as Gods and the ritualistic use of the related hymns, there was no system of their separate worship in the period of *Vedas* and *Brahmanas* when ritualism was supreme. This system was extremely meticulous and elaborate and required the services of priests to perform the rituals. It is later that the worship of Narayana appeared, presumably from the lore of the Vedic Gods. Later still arose the worship of Hari as a side or subsidiary growth. Originally, this worship had not emancipated itself from the religion of sacrifices.

In the course of time both these streams, of the worship of Vasudeva and of Narayana and Hari, appear to have joined and mingled, to an extent, with each other, though their complete identification with each other had not taken place even upto the time of *Bhagavad Gita*.

The third stream of thought arose from the *Upanisads* themselves. The *Rig-veda*, the *Upanisads*, and the *Bhagavad Gita* are believed to be mere compilations of variant and unreconciled religious thoughts,[2] as these occurred to different sages from time to time. These were handed down orally. Later, these were incorporated into books for the use of the individual Vedic schools. Thus, even in the *Upanisads*, e.g., in the *Chandogya Upanisad*, occurs the name of Krishna, which name was later associated with Vasudeva as Krishna Vasudeva . In the *Upanisads*, especially the later *Upanisads*, the idea of a Controller of the universe had also appeared. But, as we know, it is there entirely in the context of the monistic or pantheistic Brahman, the Vedic ritualism, and the caste system, which had beem accepted by the Upanisadic thought as a part of their overall system. This is the third source of there being a Supreme deity that is incharge of the world.

Though Visnu was also a Vedic deity, the theory of his incarnation had not been advanced in the Vedic times. All the same, his worship constituted the fourth stream that formed the system of Vaisnavism. Simultaneously, started forming its omnibus doctrine of incarnation to include and absorb every old or new religious development in the country. These four streams contributed to the thought of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which, being an eclectic[3] compilation, drew heavily on the religious systems of Sankhya-Yoga, Vedic Ritualism, Bhagavatism, the *Upanisads*, and the worship of Narayana and Visnu that had been in vogue then. Till then neither the identification of Vasudeva and Narayana had taken place, nor had his being the incarnation of Visnu been

accepted. Pancaratra or Bhagavata school is the original source of Vaisnavism. It espouses the cause of devotion to Vasudeva and his several forms. The *Gita* has no organic connection with this system, which had been there since the fourth century B.C. It is the chief source of Vaisnavism, being prior to the *Gita*.

It is practically a settled view that the *Gita* is of a composite origin. Admittedly, it suggests doctrines. The path of Jnana or knowledge, the path of ritualism, *Karman* or caste duties and the path of modified Sankhya are recommended as a means to the achievement of the goal. In addition, the path of worship is suggested as an alternative method of *Moksa*. It is not the type of worship of *Bhakti* which we find in the *Bhagavata Purana*, or as described and defined by Sandilya more than ten centuries later.[4] While formal worship of the deity is suggested, the metaphysical position is somewhat puzzling, as both pantheistic and dualistic views are indicated. As also stated in some of the *Upanisads*, God divides himself and forms the various beings of the world. In this sense, souls are considered indentical with God. At the same time, the dualism of Sankhya and co-eternal *Prakrti* are recognized.[5] The goal is an eternal life of bliss, a sort of Nirvana in Brahman.[6]

It has often been asserted that the *Bhagavad Gita* gave rise to theistic thought. The issue needs to be examined. In the Gita, Arjuna is asked to fight on without regard to the fruit as this was the caste duty of a *Kshatriya*.[7] These thoughts about disinterested action appear in the Sankhya-Yoga system, as also in the *Katha* and *Bribadaranyaka Upanisads*, where it is stated that, when all desires are uprooted, one attains to *Brahman*. In the Sankhya, the *Purusa* must dissociate itself from the motivated activities of the co-eternal *Prakrti*. Thus, arising both from the Upanisadic idea of Brahman and the system of dualistic Sankhya all motivation for any action has to be eliminated. While the strength of will and the power of the mind follow from Yoga, the caste duty to fight in war follows the command for the Rig-Vedic religion. The path of knowledge is from the Sankhya, and of Karma (*Yajnas*) from the *Rig Veda*. In the Sankhya, all desires and actions are the activities of *Prakrti*. Hence the way to liberation is a realisation by the *Purusa* that no activity is his. To dissociate oneself from that activity, is the aim of life. The so-called method of unattached action, a 'psychological impossibility'[8] is thus, simply another way of expressing, in a new phrase, the same idea of *Purusa* from *Prakrti*. Man should not be attached to actions in the world. He should, instead withdraw himself (the *Purusa*) from all activities,

which are only the phases and forms of *Prakrti* with which *Purusa* should not concern himself.

In the *Mahabharata* the prominent gods are Siva and Visnu. It would be relevant to record briefly the contents of the *Gita* and the systems it suggests, it being also the first formal exposition of the *Ekantika* or *Bhakti Dharma*. It is stated in Chapter IV of the *Gita* that 'those who know the incarnations and the celestial deeds of *Bhagavat* are released from the body and are not born 'again'; that *Yajna* of knowledge is the best since by it one sees all things in one self and God. As was also done by the *Upanisads*, the system of *Yajnas* or sacrifices is rationalised. Restraint, discipline and knowledge are all deemed to be *Yajnas* or sacrifices. Sankhya and Yoga are linked with *Sanyasa* and *Karam Yoga* or meditational ritualism. By following either, one gets the fruits of both. All worship and austerities should be devoted to God. This knowledge leads to peace. By the Yoga practices one gets tranquillity in *Bhagavat*. The devotees of Lord are of four kinds. Of these, the Jnani is the best. He who dies while remembering Lord Krishna attains to his condition. By the Yoga practices, concentration and meditation, and by uttering *Om* and remembering Krishna, one gets *Moksa*. There is no return from that stage. Those who die while the sun is in the northern course go to Brahman. Those who die while the sun is in the southern course go to the moon from which the soul returns. By Yoga practices one reaches *Aksara* (Brahman), the highest goal. By the meditation of syllable 'OM', the soul hits the target of Brahman. The system is made theistic by Brahman being called *Bhagavat*. The whole world is described as in *Bhagavat*. Those who perform sacrifices and rituals attain heaven thereby, i.e... the value of rituals is granted. The actions dedicated to God do not bind one. By this, one becomes a *Sanyasin* and goes to *Bhagavata*. One who adores Krishna single-mindedly becomes holy, even if one were wicked before. Even the Vaisyas, the Sudras and women can worship Bhagavata. From heaven reached by rituals one returns. But there is no return by full devotion to *Bhagavata*. Those who meditate on Bhagavata reach him quickly. Those who meditate on Brahman reach there but with difficulty. If one cannot meditate and concentrate on *Bhagavata*, nor can remember him, one should do disinterested deeds. But, this method is accorded the third place in the order of preference as a mode of salvation.

The dualism of Sankhya is virtually accepted. It is admitted that *Prakrti* and *Purusa* are co-eternal. All changes, qualities and

actions belong to *Prakrti*, which is the cause of all of them, while *Purusa*, who is inactive, suffers. In this body is *Purusa*, the Supreme Soul. By meditation one can see it and withdraw *Purusa*. One can attain to the final stage by Sankhya-Yoga, and also by *Karam* Yoga. Others can do so by meditation. Though the Sankhaya system and all the details of the working of *Prakrti* and the inactivity of *Purusa* are accepted in entirety, the atheism of Sankhya is avoided from being mentioned. It is also accepted by implication that since *Purusa* does not take part in the activities of *Prakrti*, man is absolved of all moral responsibility. Hence, the emphasis is on concentration, meditation, mechanical remembering, withdrawal, ritualism, realisation and knowledge, but not on ethical conduct as the foremost and the only way of salvation.

Two classes of men, bad and good, are mentioned. Among the first category are included men who do not care for God or morality, or those like Jains and Buddhists, or who follow other religions or philosophical systems. The diet taken and the modes of worship, sacrifices and austerities practised by one differ according to one's faith and nature, which are of three kinds, featured by goodness, activity and ignorance. It is laid down that the duties of a man vary according to his caste. The doing of the caste duties of another caste, howsoever well done, is not as good as the doing of one's own caste duties, even though without quality and worth.[9] Anyone who surrenders himself to Him would be freed of all sin.

It has been felt that the idea of action, without regard to its fruit, is prior to the *Gita*. The idea has been found, in one form or the other, in the *Chandogya*, the *Brihadaranyaka*, the *Maitri* and the *Isa Upanisads*. It is there even in the Sankhya. On the side of all phenomenal change, the Sankhya system and its twenty-four principles of change are accepted; so are Yoga principles and its meditation. "The idea of love for God does not show itself in any prominent way in the early Sanskrit literature, except in the *Pancaratra* literature." "It is the contemplative union with God that we find in the *Gita*, and the transition to it from the state of Yoga concentration is not difficult to understand."[10] In Yoga liberation is sought by the destruction of mind through psychical exercises. Late the devotee seeks to attain liberation through the special grace of God, which he can hope to acquire by contemplative union. In the *Vishnu Purana* the only case of devotion is of Prahlad's love for God.[11] The earlier literature does not emphasize the feeling element in devotion. The kind of *Bhakti* or love, which appeared

in the post Sankra-Ramanuj period, in not there. In the times of the *Upanisads* and the *Gita*, and even of Ramanuj all that is meant by *Bhakti* or devotion is *Upasana*, or meditation and concentration on God.[12]

The ideas of the worship and the grace of God are there. But the same were present, though in a faint form, even in the *Upanisads* like the *Brihadaranyaka*, the *Katha* and the *Mundaka*. The first of them calls Him the ruler of all, His presence being inside everyone. By doing good or bad, He does not become better or worse. By knowing Him one becomes a sage. He is known through the *Vedas*, worship and austerities. In the other *Upanisads*, the idea of Soul being the doer of everything is there. Only he does good deeds whom He favours and wants to elevate, i.e., the dependence of man on God is expressed.

It is necessary here to indicate the mode of worship of the Bhagavata system which became, in conjunction with streams from the other schools of thought, the chief base of the worship of the Supreme One. *Pancaratra Sambita* is the book on which is based the method of worship. The system is somewhat ritualistic and prescribed *Mantras* variously arranged. Many rites are also indicated in the *Satvata-Sambita*. *Shankaracharya* refers to the system of worship as follows : (1) Going to the temple with mind fixed on the deity, (2) collecting materials for worship, (3) actual worship, (4) the muttering of *Mantras* and (5) Yoga or meditation. By worship in this manner for a hundred years all sins are destroyed. As to the method of worship of Hari, six steps have been indicated : (1) Remembering him, (2) the uttering of his name, (3) salutation, (4) dwelling at his feet, (5) constant worship with devotion and, (6) the surrender of the soul. In the later period of *Bhagavata Purana* three more modes are mentioned : (1) Hearing His praise, (2) servitude and (3) companionship.

It is significant that all modes of worship are devotional, ritualistic and formal without any reference to social and moral conduct.

From the above analysis by Bhandarkar, it is clear that the *Bhagavad Gita* gave few new religious ideas. In fact, it records all kinds of divergent systems within one compilation. The overall system and approach remain, by and large, orthodox and traditional. The duality and co-eternal character of *Purusa* and *Prakrti* are accepted, as also the priority of the system of meditation, Yoga and concentration. Generally, the system is conservative, and it is clearly mentioned that the Lord came to fulfil

the law and not to supplant it. The rigidity and the immobility of the caste system are thus sanctified and stressed, in so far as one must do one's own caste duties and not those of other castes. Further, the sacrificial system is also regarded as a valid path. Religions like Buddhism, Jainism, etc. are, by implication, deprecated as bad. What is suggested is the worship of Bhagavata. This system had existed already. Except for the purposes of worship, the status of Sudras and women, put in the same class, is kept where it was in the Brahmanical system. The worship recommended is also of a formal nature in the sense that even remembrance at the time of death absolved one of all sins and brought salvation. The utility of the ritualistic system and the idea of the isolation of *Purusa* from the activity of the co-eternal *Prakrti* having been accepted, these are tagged to the existing system of worship of Vasudeva Krishna.[13] There is one distinct advancement from the Brahmanical system. Women and Sudras are admitted to the path of worship of Vasudeva, though not in other fields where the rigidity of the caste system is confirmed. Modern research indicates that this concession was the result of Buddhist influence since the Buddhist monasteries had been opened to women and Sudras.[14] Ramanuja defines devotion (*Bhakti*) as "un-broken contemplation of God, as smooth and ceaseless as the flow of oil."[15] It is this contemplative union with God that we find in the *Gita*. "Even Prahlada's devotion was a concentration on God and a serene contemplation forming union with God."[16] In fact, the word *Bhakti*, as in the system of the *Upanisads* or of Ramanuja, only means mere meditation (*Upasana*) and not the loving devotion or love, which idea is not there. Self-surrender in the *Gita* does not mean an ideal of love or personal relationship. It is the ideal of contentment, non-attachment and self-control. It is the idea of the old Yoga of Patanjali, where also this discipline of self-surrender is known.[17]

It is, therefore, important to understand that the mystic system of love, as in the case of *Mahayana* or of *Sufiism* or of the *Bhakti* saints like Kabir, Namdev and others, is not there in the *Gita*, either as an idea or as a base for future development. It is much later in the *Bhagavata Purana* that the different forms of emotional *Bhakti* are mentioned. In fact, as we also know from the *Sutras* of Sandilya, the *Bhakti* system of love or mystic intuition through love did not exist before Sandilya. The *Gita* sought to introduce nothing radical or heterodox. It tended only to consolidate, and bring in one compilation, variant (and on points even mutually

opposing) systems like the worship of Bhagavata; the ritualism and caste duties of the Vedic religion the dualism of Sankhya-Yoga and its mode of isolation of *Purusa* from the activities of the *Prakrti*; the meditation of Yoga, and the monism and pantheism of the *Upanisads*. According to Dasgupta, "the great solution of the *Gita* is the compromise it advances between the worldly life of allotted duties and the hermit's life of absolute renouncement." "On the one hand we purify our minds by non-attachment, and yet, on the other hand, we continue to perform all the ritualistic and other 'duties belonging to our particular caste or stage of life,' *i.e.*, the prescribed stages of four ashrams."[18] The *Gita* laid down different paths of *Moksa*. But they were all old systems. While it gave priority to the path of *Jnana* and the meditational processes of Yoga, and accepted the ritualistic mysticism of the *Vedas*, it also approved of the meditational devotion of the Bhagavata system.

Before we deal with further developments in Vaisnavism and indicate the chief Vaisnava schools of *Bhakti* that arose upto the time of the radical *Bhakti* of *Kabir*, it will be useful, briefly, to state the chief features of Vaisnavism as it emerged from the period of the *Gita*. The biggest contribution of the *Gita* is that it gave formal sanction to the path of worship as a means of salvation and admitted women and Sudras to it. But, it was only an alternative path to *Moksa*. The other paths recognised by the *Gita* had their own priorities. The ideal, by the very nature of things, was merger or salvation from the empirical world with the object of never returning to it. In life all one had to do was to perform one's caste duties that had been assigned under the Vedic and orthodox scriptures. Their authority was fully recognized as also of the overall social structure it prescribed.

In due course, the identity between the cult of worship of Narayana and Vasudeva was established. In the *Upanisad* period Visnu rose to a senior position from being a junior *God* in the Rig Vedic period. Even in some parts of Mahabharata, the divinity of Vasudeva Krishna had not been generally accepted. In the course of time, the four streams of Vasudeva (the historic God), Visnu (the Vedic God), Narayana (the cosmic God), and the *Upanisad* idea of a Supreme Soul combined to form one religion. To this was added the fifth stream of Gopala Krishna from the Ahir race. Till about the Christian era, the story of the boyhood of Gokula Krishna was not known. But later on, Gopala Krishna was also identified with Vasudeva Krishna. It has been seen that the *Gita*, which introduced the idea of God, was not organically connected with

the worship of Vasudeva and his forms.

By this time, however, the doctrine of incarnation of Visnu had also been formed. This gave an impetus to the attempt at the integration, within one system, of the various religious growths and modes of worship, even though very divergent in their historical origin, creeds or aims. The only thing common among them was the general acceptance of the Vedic scriptures and the *status quo* in the old social order. In fact, the object of the theory of incarnation was to absorb and assimilate, within the old system, all new religious doctrines and developments, even though heterodox. It is in the post-Vedic period that the theory of incarnation of Visnu came to be formed. The idea is that God takes the human form in order to save man. All *Avataras* are supposed to be the different forms of Visnu. The theory is a noteworthy feature of Hinduism. It enables it to absorb other creeds by declaring their Gods or prophets as the manifestation of the Supreme God or Visnu.[19] In the *Gita* Lord Krishna says that those who worship other Gods also worship me, though imperfectly. The number of *Avataras* of Visnu, rose from time to time, including the boar, the man-lion, the dwarf, Rama, swan, tortoise, and Vasudeva-Krishna. In the Bhagavata *Purana* this number rose to twenty-three. The mythical Kapila, the author of the dualistic Sankhya system without a God, is included as an *Avatara*, as also Risabha, the first Trithankra of the Jains. By the eighth century A.D., Buddha is also added to the list of *Avataras*. It appears that in Vaisnavism or the Bhagavata religion, the purity of the monotheistic doctrine was hardly the concern of anyone. Similarly, in the apparently synthetic attempt of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the elements of the dualistic systems like the Sankhya and Yoga were included both for meditational purposes and for explaining changes in life as the activity of co-eternal *Prakrti*. Among the *Avataras*, authors of the non-theistic systems of Buddhism, Jainism and Sankhya were also included. Evidently, to the authors of Vaisnavism, the only concern was to accept and to show Visnu or Vasudeva as the supreme God. They were unconcerned with the unity or purity of doctrine and theology, or with the modes of worship and the prescribed religious practices. In fact, heterogeneous doctrines and the authors of even heterodox, non-theistic and dualistic systems were owned. It is important to understand that, as against the equality and unity of man before God inherent in any monotheistic system, the gradings of the caste system and the social and religious segregation of the Sudras were

kept intact duly sanctioned and approved. In addition, Vedic ritualism and the authority of the *Vedas* were accepted. All this was maintained not only in the earlier Vaisnava systems, but also in the *Vishist Advaita* of Ramanuja and the later Vaisnavism.

Lord Rama was taken to be an *Avatara* probably in the early centuries of the Christian era, though there was then no separate cult in his name. It was later near the 11th century A.D. that the cult of Lord Rama actually came in existence. Here, too, there are manuals giving the mode of worship of the deity, by means of *Mantras*, formulas and magic circles, quite like those prescribed in the *Satvata-Sambita* for the worship of Vasudeva.

Next we come to the period of Sandilya and *Bhagavata Purana* in the eleventh century A.D. The *Bhakti* these two describe is not the worship of or meditation on God as in the *Gita*. Nor is it a formal singing. It is a deep affection for God. Even His *Maya* cannot bind man to the world. According to *Vallabha*, God invokes love in man. It is a favour bestowed by Him (*Pushti*).[20] In the emotional type of *Bhakti*, the devotee in heart and soul feels a spiritual intoxication and joy. As in the case of Chaitanya, he 'sings, laughs, dances and weeps'. He is no longer a person of the world.[21]

It is in the *Bhagavata Purana* that we first find the idea of devotion as the supreme source of bliss. It becomes the highest goal. So it substitutes the place of wisdom or philosophical knowledge. *Bhakti* is believed to destory all the past sins. Thus, *Bhakti* also becomes a *Mantra*, a magic. But no moral action is stressed. The *Bhakti* of *Bhagavata Purana* is not the old contemplative meditation of God. It is the upsurge of feelings and emotions of love of God.[22] The *Bhagavata Purana* mentioned nine modes of worship. Each of these can lead to *Moksa*.[23] These include listening to the praise of God, the reading of the sacred books, the repeating of God's name, remembering Him, etc. The repeating of God's name can bring deliverance. These modes are ritualistic and magical and no moral action is stressed. Idol worship is accepted. Sandilya's definition of *Bhakti* not only prescribes it as the only mode of worship, but also distinguishes it from the types of worship prevalent earlier than his period and from *Bhakti* as indicated in the *Gita*. These old modes of worship, like the offering of flowers (as mentioned in the Gita), indicate only *Sraddha* or faith. *Bhakti* is a loving affection. It is neither knowledge nor action.[24] Sandilya and his commentator, Svapnesvara, attack the Vedanta doctrine that liberation or salvation arises from knowledge

of the Soul. "The true method is *Bhakti*, devotional faith, directed to the Lord. This is the immediate cause of salvation. Knowledge is an auxiliary to *Bhakti*, and may become useful by washing away the filth of unbelief. But it will not itself abolish the veil which exists between the soul and the Supreme." "In the highest form it (*Bhakti*) is affection fixed upon the Lord. It is an affection directed to a person, not mere belief in a system. Affection is its essence. It is not mere knowledge of God, for it is possible that even those who hate Him may have knowledge of Him. Nor is it knowing the Lord as an object or worship, etc., for these are outward acts, and *Bhakti* is not necessarily present to them. It is simply an affection. It follows knowledge of the greatness and other attributes of the Adorable One, but is not that knowledge. The particular knowledge which it follows is that there is a promise of immortality to him who abides (i.e., has *Bhakti*) in Him. 'Abiding' is something more than mere knowledge. Moreover, affection is unselfish. It is not a wish. It is expressed by the phrase, "I love, I have an affection for, and yet I do not wish for", since wish refers only to what one has not obtained, but affection refers equally to what is obtained and what is not obtained."

"*Bhakti* is not an action (a 'work'). It does not depend, as knowledge does, upon an effort of the will. Hence, as it is not an action, its fruit (beatitude) is endless. Every action, on the other hand, ultimately comes to an end, so that everything gained by works ultimately perishes." "The means are knowledge, concentration, etc. The end is *Bhakti*."

"Knowledge is subsidiary to *Bhakti*." "Moreover, knowledge is not essential, though a means, and an important one. Affection occurs even in the absence of knowledge."

"*Bhakti* (or faith) is not *Sraddha* (or belief). Belief may be merely subsidiary to ceremonial works, not so faith. Belief is a preliminary subsidiary to faith, but is not faith."[25] This is Sandilya's definition of *Bhakti*.

Even the *Bhagavata Purana* is aware of the three methods of knowledge, works and devotion, and accepts their validity, as also of the Vedic scriptures and the prescribed social system.[26] The goal of life and the role of *Jivanmukta* remain, as before, other-worldly.

It is also significant to mention that the Sankhya idea of *Prakrti* was so much owned by Vaisnavism, that later Sita, as the consort of Lord Rama, who is the inactive soul, has been deemed to be responsible for the entire activity. The same acceptance is

also evident from the emergence of the entire world from Shakti, the consort of Siva and Saivism.

Further development of Vaisnavism started in the South, far away from the earlier centres. Dr. Tara Chand feels that this took place as the impact of Islam. But, this issue is not relevant to our purpose since we are mainly concerned with the nature and content of this development. A chain of Alvar saints appeared, extending over a long period. It is claimed that they arose both before and after Sankara. The favourite deity of Kullasekhara, an historically known Alvar saint of the twelfth century, is Lord Rama and not Lord Krishna. This new growth spread to the north, the east and the west. In the following pages, starting with Ramanuja, we shall briefly indicate the systems and the views of all the chief exponents and saints of this new Vaisnava *Bhakti* movement. The radical system of saints like Kabir, Namdev and others, who according to their beliefs, are outside this fold, would be considered separately.

RAMANUJA

Among the Alvars were two classes, the Saints, who composed the devotional songs, and the Acharyas, who were the philosophers and teachers of the doctrine. May be, the challenge came from the success of the Advaita of Sankara. This eliminated the need and importance of all devotional worship. He deemed the world to be illusory. For him Brahman alone was real. In the face of it, the basis for the cult of idol and devotional worship was being eroded. Ramanuja, therefore, in pursuance of the direction of his guru, took upon himself this task of tracing from the scriptures, the *Upanisads* and the *Brahma Sutras* the justification and basis for this religion of *Ishvara* worship prevalent in his time. In his system the world is real and there are three eternal principles of Brahman or God, (*Ishvara*) individual souls and the world (*Prakrti*). The individual soul and the insensate world are deemed to be the attributes or body of Brahman, just as the soul has a human body. The three elements are different, but the embodied parts, though different, are one. These three parts are inseparable and eternal. Before creation the body of the Supreme Soul is in a subtle form, but with creation it develops. At that time matter and souls are in Him, in an unmanifest form. It is something like a Platonic idea. Later, he has them in his body in a manifest form.[27] Thus Brahman or God is both the material and the efficient cause

of the world and controls it from within. The entire development is from the mundane egg. The soul and the world are a mode of Supreme, eternal but dependent on Him. Man is identical with the All-embracing God. The system of changes of *Prakrti* for the creation of *Ahankara*, activity, etc., is the same as in Sankhya, except that God is there to guide it. *Ishvara* has a wonderful celestial body with Lakshmi as his consort. *Ishvara* appears in five forms : (1) as Narayana or Para-Vasudeva, he lives, adorned with ornaments and gems, in Vaikuntha on a throne surrounded by *Sesa* (serpent), *Garuda* and other delivered souls; (2) as his four forms in the world, including that of Vasudeva to enable men to worship him; (3) as the ten *Avataras*, fish, tortoise and others, (4) as present in each being even when one goes to heaven or hell; and (5) as in the idols kept in the houses. Unlike Sankara, Ramanuja takes the ritualism of the *Vedas* and the *Brahma Vidya* of the *Upanisada* as equally important. Rituals are not for a lower class of people nor do they give a lower truth. He thinks that rituals prescribe the method of worship. These he accepts fully, as also the caste system. The doctrine relating to Brahman shows the nature of God, and both together (rituals and *Brahma Vidya*) form one doctrine. They are not addressed to different persons as is believed by Sankara. ***Karm Marga*** for Ramanuja includes the Vedic rituals, the worship of idols, as given in the *Agamas*, and the repeating of *Mantras*.[28]

Souls are of three kinds : (1) the bound ones, (2) the delivered ones, and (3) the eternal souls like *Garuda*. Of the bound ones, some seek wealth and others seek heaven. They perform all rites, sacrifices and pilgrimages. Some of them are devotees of *Bhagavat* and some worship other Gods or *Avataras*. Of those who desire deliverance, some seek the consciousness of the pure soul only (*Kevalin*) and others eternal bliss. Of the latter, some seek God through *Bhakti*. They first study the Vedic mysticism and the philosophy of sacrifices and rites. But, this *Bhakti* is open to the three higher castes only and not to Sudras. The caste system is maintained intact.

Those who cannot do the *Bhakti* of the type mentioned above can resort to *Prapatti*, or surrender to God, after renouncing the world. This system is open to all classes. For the efficacy of *Bhakti*, *Karm Yoga* and *Jnana Yoga* are essential. The first is the performance of all prescribed acts, rituals, sacrifices ceremonies, pilgrimages and the worship of idols. *Jnana Yoga* is the gaining of cognitive knowledge of one's being separate from *Prakrti* and being an Attribute of God. These two preparatory steps lead to

Bhakti which consists in meditations, accompanied by the Yoga practices of Yama, Niyama, etc. These methods include : (1) the use of un-polluted and un-prohibited food, (2) chastity, (3) constant practice, (4) the performing of rites and sacrifices according to one's means, (5) virtuous acts of truth, compassion, *Ahimsa*, uprightness, (6) hopefulness and (7) absence of elatedness. *Bhakti*, as done by these seven means, leads to one's seeing God. As against it, *Prapatti* involves complete self-surrender. In the *Padma-Purana* seven other modes of worship are also suggested. They are all ritualistic and formal, e.g., (1) the imprinting of marks on the body and the forehead, (2) the repeating of *Mantras*, (3) the drinking of water used for washing the feet of the idol of Hari, (4) the eating of the cooked food offered to the idol, (5) the service of devotees, (6) the observing of fasts on the fixed days of the lunar month. (7) the laying of *Tulsi* leaves on the idol, etc.

This *Bhakti* has no ethical bias or emphasis. It is a *Bhakti* of a formal and emotional nature without the kind of love that fructifies into a moral life for the service of man. On the basis of the study of Alvar saints, Hooper asserts that there is no necessary connection between *Bhakti* and character. In this regard, he particularly cites the example of one Alvar saint, Tirumangai.[29] Maitra who has discussed the problem of Hindu ethics and the problem of ideal life in all Hindu schools of orthodox philosophy, including that of the Vaishesika, the Purva Mimansa, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava and Vallabhacharya, comes to the conclusion that a common feature of all these doctrines of ideal life or *Moksa* is "the conception of the ideal as a negation, or at least as a transcendence, of the empirical life proper, and that this state is thus a super-moral spiritual ideal rather than a strictly moral ideal."[30] And after achieving the state of *Moksa*, there is hardly anything to be done. It is a negative and quietist ideal without any activity, except that in the case of Ramanuja's system one has to do unconditional scriptural works like the daily rituals, bathing in the Ganges on the day of lunar or solar eclipse, etc. As such, in the orthodox Hindu systems, the negative ideal or goal has been accepted. It is a transcendental state of deliverance from all the struggles of life. It is generally and essentially a state of quiescence.[31] In all these systems including that of the *Vishnu Purana*, release from the bondage of the world is sought.

Ramanuja's *Bhakti* does not mean boundless love; it only involves *Upasanas* or meditations. The goal is attainable in this life. The actual goal is achieved after death and the soul then has a

direct vision of Truth as its own essence. It is a doctrine of identity. Upto the end one must carry on ritualistic duties and duties of one's station in life, i.e., the caste duties.[32]

We have detailed Ramanuja's system, since it is one of the oldest and the most typical of the theistic schools that emerged after the onslaughts of the Vedantic school of Sankara. Like the *Bhagavad Gita,* its theism, if at all it may be so called, is seemingly synthetic and incorporates practically all the chief elements of the Sankhya, the Yoga and the Vedic ritualism. The world and souls are the body of Brahman both in their manifest and unmanifest forms. On the metaphysical side, the system is broadly pantheistic, God being the material cause of the world, and *Ishvara,* the souls and the material world being the constituents of Brahman. In a way, the system is also pluralistic, as souls and *Prakrti* are eternal. In addition, the socio-religious sanctity of the caste system is accepted. It makes no departure from the earlier socio-religious systems. Rather, a justification is afforded for the continuance of the Brahmanical system for the worship of images. For purposes of *Bhakti* the world has virtually to be given up and celibacy maintained. Full sanction is given to faith in the Vedic scriptures and the observance of Vedic rites and other prescribed pilgrimages and fasts. The world activity, including all moral life, is virtually a movement of the eternal *Prakrti,* from the bondage of which release is sought by resort to Yoga and meditational methods. The cultivation of virtues has no social content. As in all the Yogic systems, virtues are practised entirely with a view to preparation and personal discipline for meditation. Virtuous acts, as such, have no social ends or validity. They serve purely as aids to meditation. In the social fields one has to do one's caste duties, and the word *Karma* includes all Vedic rituals, idol worship, and other ceremonies.

The ideal is the attainment of Narayana the enjoyment of bliss and deliverance from the world. As indicated already, the system of training is the *Karma* Yoga, the *Jnana* Yoga and the *Bhakti* Yoga (meditations). Though the householder could follow the path of salvation, the *Sanyas Ashram* prescribed in the *Upanisads* leads to speedy salvation. The person who has made the final achievement, is also obliged to perform all the rituals (*Karma*) like fasting and baths prescribed in the *Vedas* for a normal being.

MADHVA

In Madhva's system the separate existence of God, souls and the material world is assumed. And though God is the efficient cause of the world, the same is due to the movement of eternal *Prakrti* which is its material cause. The system is thus dualistic with a plural number of souls. In substance, the Sankhya system is accepted, except for the addition of a Personal God. In the system of Madhva, God is a substance, and the doctrine of incarnation is believed. In his qualities and actions, the *Avatara* is identical with God. Lakshmi is distinct from God but is dependent upon Him. She is co-extensive or co-eternal with God. Souls are of three kinds: (a) those fit for attaining bliss, (b) those eternally undergoing transmigration, (c) those fit for darkness only. Creation begins when God disturbs the equilibrium or *Prakrti*. As for the world activity, the Sankhya system is virtually accepted. *Moksa* can be attained through service but only by a soul fit for it.

There are eighteen methods that help salvation, including (1) *Vairagya* or renunciation of the world and its pleasures, (2) self-control, (3) self-surrender, (4) acquaintance with the lore, (5) attendance on the guru, (6) knowledge got from the guru or a Vaisnava and reflection on it, (7) devotion to God, (8) sympathy for inferiors and love for equals, (9) the performance of Vedic rites without the desire for fruit, (10) the avoidance of prohibited acts or sins, (11) the knowledge of Visnu being the highest, and of the distinctions between God and the world, *Prakrti* and *Purusas*, God and individuals, etc., (12) worship or *Upasana*, the hearing of *Sastras*, meditation, etc. These steps lead to the direct knowledge of God which is cognitive. The followers of Madhva use special marks, created sometimes even by heated metal, leaving permanent scars on the body.

In this system God cannot be exhaustively known even by revelation. He is apprehensible by the mind but is not fully comprehensible.[33] The presence of the last two classes of souls, that are not redeemable and are doomed to misery and darkness, is something extremely incongruous in a theistic system. For it virtually limits the scope of human freedom and divine grace.[34] As no progress is envisaged for these souls, the system is rather deterministic. The distinction of one soul from the other remains even after *Moksa*. The ideal is the attainment of bliss. For release, the knowledge of God is more essential than self-knowledge. Both are obtained through the study of the scriptures. For the

knowledge of God, meditation and reflection under a guru are necessary. The realisation of God's greatness and goodness is the means to salvation. Like Ramanuja, Madhva rejects the ideal of *Jivanmukta*, and feels that scriptural duties and those of one's station in life should be done throughout life.[35] As in the case of Sankara, performance of any worldly duties or moral acts by the spiritually enlightened person is unnecessary. In short, here too the ideal of salvation is otherworldly. One has no socio-political role. The caste and ritual duties are accepted and the ritual system is adhered to till the end of one's life. Madhva and Ramanuja, in a way, reject the idea of *Jivanmukta*. For, they feel that complete knowledge and bliss are realized more after death than in life.[36] The goal is achieved by doing scriptural duties, the study of scriptures and meditation.

NIMBARKA

Nimbarka's system is monistic and also, in a way, pluralistic. He feels that the world, souls and God are both distinct and identical (*Bheda-Abheda*). The first two have no independent existence, but are dependent on God. His recommendations for the modes of *Bhakti* are practically the same as of Ramanuja. He believes that Brahman had in it the rudiments of the world. By manifestation Brahman becomes the material cause of the world. The souls are numberless. Soul's knowledge depends on God. But, by contact with *Maya* or *Prakrti*, its form is distorted. *Prakrti* is eternal. The nature of soul can be known by the grace of God. In this system the Vedic ritualism, the theory of incarnation, the caste system and Sankhya are accepted. The approach is other-worldly. The object is for the soul to know, by dissociation from *Prakrti* and by the grace of God, its own nature. The worship recommended is that of Radha-Krishna. This worship is more devotional than that in the case of Ramanuja, but the other-worldly approach remains. Since the individual soul is distorted by its contact with *Prakrti*, naturally the mystic way is that of ascetic withdrawal from life.

RAMANANDA

All systems prior to Ramananda, including that of Sankara, excluded the Sudras from their fold. They had to do the duties prescribed for their low castes and rise in status so as to be born as Brahmins. Then alone they could tread the path of the Vaisnava

Bhakti. Ramanand's reform extended to the effect that lower castes, if admitted to the Vaisnava fold and as devotees of Visnu, could dine with the other disciples. For the rest, the system is the same as of Ramanuja and his deity was Rama with Sita as his consort.

TULSIDAS

Though a disciple of Ramananda, Tulsidas's philosophy leans towards spiritual monism. Like the other Vaisnava saints, he accepts the rigidity of the caste system, even though his guru Ramananda had to an extent relaxed it for admitted Vaisnavas. He is conservative and other-worldly. In his system there is no emphasis on socio-moral conduct. God's grace is the main instrument to bring about *Moksa* and the destruction of all sins.

VALLABHA

In Vallabha's system the devotee can continue to be a householder. God has Himself become the world and the individual souls, because the Supreme Soul was not happy while all alone. He decided to become many. In all these cases the world view is pantheistic. The world is real, but salvation is only through *Bhakti.* Though one need not give up the householder's life, the method of worship is entirely ritualistic and ceremonial. Apart from the devotion of singing and praising God, the conductor of worship should rise early, drink the washings of the feet of the idol, utter the names of Govardhana and others, remember the river Yamuna, etc. Similarly, at other times of the day, there should be image worship and the feeding of the deity, accompanied by other ceremonies, like *Arti*, the ringing of bells the blowing of the conch shell, bathing, dressing and the feeding of the idol.

There are no public temples, but each guru, who is a householder, maintains a private temple at his own house. At eight fixed intervals during the day the devotee should visit the temple of the guru. The best stage of salvation is that of joining the sport of Krishna and Radha in the highest place of heaven, called *Goloka.* Vallabha's system is not known for any new ideas except that he has excessively ritualised *Bhakti* and made it open to householders. Bhandarkar believes that Vallabha's devotion appears more dramatic than real. Ultimately, such forms of Vaisnavism gained unsavoury reputation, especially the systems where Krishna and his consort were worshipped.

CHAITANYA

Born in Bengal, Chaitanya was a devotee of Radha and Krishna. He developed the emotional side of the *Bhakti* of Krishna and his consort. He composed songs, did fervent singing and ecstatic dancing. This was his method of approach to God. His disciples included persons of all castes and even Muslims. For him the deeply emotional singing of the praises of God (Radha-Krishna) was the only method of *Bhakti* and salvation. While singing, the devotees would laugh, weep, jump and embrace each other in a state of emotional outburst. Chaitanya became an ascetic and a *Sanyasi.* His loud singing became so charged with feeling that he even swooned under the intensity of his emotion. For Chaitanya, Krishna is the highest God who is so beautiful that he excites love in the hearts of all. The Vedantic theory of Chaitanya is that of Nimbarka, or of identity with a difference between the soul and God (*Bheda-Abheda*). God, Krishna, can be approached by love alone. When, through continuous love, the soul becomes one with God, it becomes unconscious of its individual existence, and becomes, as it were, absorbed in Him. In spirit the soul is one with God. God appears in finite spirits. Thus, the soul is identical with God. The goal of life is the bliss of union in which the soul loses its consciousness. But actually they remain distinct. Most of *Advaitas*, followers of Chaitanya, observe caste distinctions; but those who are recluses or *Bairagis* do not do so. The teachers of this system are all celibates. The type of *Bhakti* the *Bhagavata Purana* preaches is illutrated by the life of Chaitanya. Chaitanya mentions different kinds of love : (a) love with awe and reverence for His greatness, it is the peaceful, calm and tender love (*Santa*); (b) love with the submission of the heart like that of a servant's (*Dasya*) for his master; (c) the love of God as a friend (*Sakhya*); and (d) the deepest love as of the wife for her husband (*Madhura*). The last kind is the sweetest and the deepest as for a beloved. Love is God's very nature. He loves man.[37]

The Brahmanical Indians cherish four values, *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksa*. The final goal is *Moksa*. The other three are the lower ideals. Of course, *Dharma* is a preparatory ideal and it means nothing beyond doing the duties of the station of one's life. Since the *Upanisads*, *Moksa* has been the final ideal. At the time of the *Upanisads* the concept of *Jivanmukta* emerged. It was felt that the evil of *Samsara* carries with it the seeds of destruction. In any case, this ideal of renunciation, leading to *Moksa* or

liberation, ultimately came to be the accepted ideal. Though *Jivanmukta* was also assumed, he too in that state completely cuts himself off from all worldly life. This is the view according to Yajnavalkya and Sankara.[38] In the other group of Ramanuja and Madhva, the scriptural and ritualistic duties have to be carried out by everyone to the end of one's days. The highest bliss and union are reached only after death.

Bhakti being only an alternative method of *Moksa*, it has been felt that *Bhakti Marga*, or the devotional method of *Moksa*, is only for those for whom the idea of a Personal God has a special appeal.

We have had a brief picture of various Vaisnava developments and different schools of its thought. Let us indicate briefly the chief features of this mystic system.

(1) The overall world view is either pantheistic or dualistic, where the co-eternal *Prakrti* is assumed. In the former case the world and souls are the body or qualities of Brahman. Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the world. In the latter case, it is virtually the Sankhya-Yoga system with the addition of *Ishvara* as a God of Attributes. Generally speaking, the soul forms a part of Brahman. Even if the ideas of worship between man and God, and the creature and the Creator, are mentioned, there is basic identity between the soul and Brahman, the former being a part of the latter. In theism the world is the creation of God. It is different from God, nor is the world co-eternal with Him. Hence, whatever name one may give to the Vaisnava system, it is not theistic in the normal sense of the word.

(2) There is belief in the *Vedas* and their ritualistic mysticism. The social order and other practices enjoined by them, are accepted. While each sect put its own interpretation on the *Vedas*, including the *Upanisads*, there is implicit faith in their scriptural sanctity and all that they stand for.

(3) The caste system and its social prohibitions are strictly adhered to. Ramananda was the only person who made some relaxation but that too was only in regard to those who had been admitted to his Vaisnava faith as the disciples of Visnu.

(4) The world is deemed to be real. But, in view of the Sankhya-Yoga background and the ideal of *Moksa* or liberation from *Samsara*, the entire approach and the attitude are other-worldly.

(5) The goal is of *Moksa*. It means the return of the soul for merger in Brahman, or to its original state of purity, bliss and union with God, without involvement in the world of man. The aim is

not the service of God or man, nor is it the carrying out of His will in the world. None of these matters receives any priority, the ideal being that of salvation (*Moksa*) from the tangles of the world.

(6) As such, there is no stress on the moral life except for purposes of personal purity and aid to meditation.

(7) In some cases the final achievement is made after death. In life, the *Jivanmukta* has no social role to play, except that he is still obliged to follow all the prescribed ritualistic duties.

(8) The theory of *Avataras* is accepted and idol worship is practised.

(9) During the earlier period of Vaisnavism, the path of worship was only an alternative way of deliverance from the world. This path was not even the first in the order of priority. Later, when it was recognized as the chief mode of salvation, the worship contemplated was only meditational, formal or ritualistic. In the case of Chaitanya the worship became extremely emotional in character.

In view of the above, the Vaisnava systems whether theistic, pantheistic or dualistic, remain in theory and practice mysticisms of Merger of Isolation.

(A more detailed account of Vaisnavism may be seen in 'The Sikh Ideology' by Daljeet Singh.)

7

Saivism[1]

Saivism has, perhaps, the longest religious history in India. We shall deal with only its principal sects and developments. Rudra, mentioned as a fearsome howler in the Vedic hymns, was a junior Rig-Vedic god. Probably he was picked up from the old Indian tradition. Some say he figured even in the Harappan age since seals bearing his Yogic pose have been found. Saivism has a number of differences with the other Hindu mysticisms. First is its history. Siva is probably indigenous to the Indian soil. Siva or Rudra is supposed to be a god more ancient than the other Rig-Vedic gods. He is apparently a god of destruction and the prayers are to be addressed to him just to avoid his harmful propensities. Secondly, while Saivites believe in the scriptural value of the *Vedas*, they treat the *Agamas*, supposed to be the word of Lord Siva, to be their chief scripture. Thirdly, among Saivites the dominance of the priestly class has been less marked. For the same reason, the shackles of the caste system have been less rigid among them. Rudra was prayed to mainly out of fear so as to avoid damage from him. But, in due course he became a benign god and was, in addition to Rudra, called Siva, though the underlying sentiment towards him was still of fear. The knowledge about Siva was deemed enough for salvation. Those who sought him in their heart became immortal. He was given other names too and was propitiated in a number of ways. These methods included, as in the times of the *Gribya Sutra*, the performance of rites and bull sacrifice. He was still a feared and wild god. Though an old Indian god, in one sense the popular worship of Siva or Rudra started later than that of Visnu. In the time of *Svetasvatra Upanisad*, Rudra or Siva had attained the dignity of a supreme god.

From the metaphysical point of view, three elements are mentioned. Rudra or Siva the ruler; second, the ruled and ignorant souls; and third the material elements of enjoyment and suffering, i.e., the world. These three elements are supposed to be virtually

co-eternal. In one sense the three elements are parts of the One Whole. It is believed that this concept of the three elements being parts of the One Whole was later adopted by Ramanuja in his qualified monism. In this system, which is in one sense pantheistic, the world is real. Siva is the inmost Soul, the Creator and Ruler of the world. He is without qualities. He created *Hiranyagarbha.* The way of achievement or enlightenment is through knowledge, meditations and Yogic processes that lead to the perception of the Supreme Soul. By meditating on Him all ignorance is dissolved. By knowledge of Siva, without any action, one is freed from bondage and becomes immortal. The idea of freedom from the world and bondage is there, and the goal is the achievement of immortality and bliss. The knowledge of Siva is the door to this immortality. Even by seeing the superior soul (*Isa*) one is delivered. After achieving immortality one reaches eternal peace and the noose of death is cut off. While He is Absolute, He is without qualities. The value of Sankhya-Yoga is accepted. For, by knowing the cause, which is to be understood by Sankhya and Yoga, a man is free from bondage. The Yoga processes are prescribed so as to make the meditation effective and to reach the supreme goal of immortality.

The *Svetasvatra Upanisad* is probably the first *Upanisad* indicating the adoration for Brahman or god, who is Rudra or Siva and not Visnu. Vasudeva Krishna of *Bhagavad Gita* is a later development, and we have in this *Upanisad* the germs of the system of worship. For this adoration one should eat moderately and take Siva's vow for giving up greed and anger. One has also to be forgiving. Meditation and the muttering of *OM* have to be practised for the final realisation. The method is ritualistic and ascetic in nature, e.g., ashes are besmeared on the body and *Mantras*, are repeated for deliverance from the trammels of life. In the *Mahabharata*, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to worship Durga, the consort of Siva. It is evident that Siva, as a god, was in the field before the period of the *Bhagavad Gita* and before Vaisnavism came to contest his supremacy.

THE PASUPATA SYSTEM

Though Saiva worship is very old, the oldest regular Saiva system is of *Pasupata.* It appeared in the second century B.C. The *Agamas* is the scripture said to have been revealed by Siva himself. Under this system, the world, or effects (*Karya*), including souls,

are produced from *Pradhana*. *Ishvara* and *Pradhana* are the cause of everything (*Karana*). The 'effects' are of three kinds : the individual soul (*Pasu*), 'cognition' and 'organs'. These 'effects' are dependent on Siva. Cognition is the quality of the individual soul. Souls are of two kinds, impure and pure. Impure souls are connected with the body and its organs. The pure ones are unconnected with them.

Yoga is the method to connect the soul with God through the conceptual faculty. It is of two kinds; the first of action, like the muttering of formulae and meditation; and the second of stopping all action and merely using the feeling. The aim is the deliverance of the soul from the universe, or the disconnection of soul from the body and its organs. The *Vidhi* or discipline involves the besmearing of the body with ashes thrice daily, and activities like meaningless artificial laughing, singing, dancing, the making of different odd and repulsive sounds and movements, and the uttering of ridiculous and abhorrent words. The methods used are all ritualistic and formal, and do not relate to human conduct in life or the world, which is virtually given up. Begging is practised and remnants of food are eaten in order to be above any sense of decency. After this comes the final deliverance of the soul from the misery of the world. This deliverance is also of two kinds. The first is the destruction of misery, and the second is the gaining of powers of knowing and doing things miraculously. The soul with powers lives eternally. While in the other systems the final aim is heaven from which there is no return to mortal life, here the goal is nearness to God from which there is no return. But the soul has enormous powers. The Yoga method leads the soul through the conceptual faculty or *Chit* to the final stage. The aim is to seek deliverance from the bondage and misery of the world with a view to non-return and gain powers. In the *Pasupata* system, generally, the processes and methods prescribed for release from the world and for the attaining of the highest stage are other-worldly, ascetic, ritualistic, fantastic and wild.

THE SAIVA SYSTEM

Here too there are three elements; the Lord (Siva), the individual soul and fetters. Siva or God has a body made up of powers and five specific formulae or *Mantras*, representing different parts of his body with five powers. By these powers he creates, protects, destroys, conceals and helps. The discipline for

the final attainment of deliverance from fetters or the world is fourfold. The first part is of knowledge (*Vidya*), the second of *action* or *rituals*, the third of meditation or Yoga, and the fourth of discipline or *Karya*. The first part consists in gaining knowledge about the system, its features, disciplines, and methods of release and attainment. This knowledge also includes explanations about the system, its formulae, *Mantras*, rituals, meditations, prohibitions, and practices. The second part, or the ritualistic stage (*Kriyapada*), involves the muttering of *Mantras* twilight worship, other worship, throwing oblations, performing various rituals and ceremonies, etc. The third part comprises meditation, concentration, breath control, the Yogic *samadhi* and the like, for the attainment of Yogic progress and powers. The fourth part concerns the basis of *Sivalinga*, the rosary, various ceremonies etc., and doing penances, purifying ceremonies and rituals. There are prohibitions regarding the killing of animals, the eating of food offered to the deity and slander against the Saiva system. Siva acts according to the deeds of the souls. The delivered soul is a part of the body of Siva. When the fetters of the soul are removed, it becomes atomic, self-conscious, eternal and all-pervading. When delivered, it becomes identical with Siva, and has eternal and boundless energy, with all powers of action. But it is dependent on Siva. The *Mukta* is a person with five formulae or *Mantras* as his body. Though these *Muktas* become Sivas, they are not independent. The methods of achievement, as indicated above, are ritualistic and meditational. The system is ascetic and other-worldly, and the question of social concern does not arise.

Both the Saiva and *Pasupata* system are, in a way, dualistic and pluralistic. They maintain that the supreme and individual souls are separate entities. In the Saiva system the delivered souls are almost identical with Siva. They are like Siva except for the power of creation. According to the *Pasupata* system, the soul, in the delivered state, shakes off its ignorance and weaknesses. It attains immense knowledge and power. God and *Pradhana* are supposed to be the cause of the world. It is dualistic also in the sense that souls and Siva remain separate. The later Saiva schools hold that Siva possesses *Shakti* and develops a power consisting of the sediments of the individual soul and the material world. From this power the whole world is created. This doctrine is qualified spiritual monism like that of Ramanuja inasmuch as Siva, characterised by Shakti, creates and, in a way manifests itself as the constituent cause of the world.

KAPALIKAS

In the Kapalika school of Saivism, while the metaphysical position is the same, the methods and disciplines adopted are more ritualistic, ascetic and even crude. They besmear the body with ashes, use ornaments and bracelets and eat food out of a skull. They even eat ashes. Worship is done with blood and wine, and other horrible practices are also indulged in.

KASHMIR SAIVISM

In contrast with the other Saiva systems, in Kashmir Saivism, God needs no cause like *Pradhana* to create the world, nor is He the material cause of the world; nor does the system assume the principle of *Maya* to create any illusion or the world. Whether the world is an illusion, the underlying principle is that it has to be given up as something not worthwhile and a bondage. God creates the world by the force of His will. He makes the world appear in Himself, as if distinct from Himself, though it is not really so. It is like a house that appears in a mirror, which is unaffected by the house. Similarly God is unaffected by the created world. It is believed that God Himself, by His power, appears in the form of individual souls, and, by another power, brings into existence the state of things which forms the world and the conditions of our life. According to this system, the individual soul is identical with the Supreme Soul. The soul is Siva in His self-limitation. It is identical with Him. It is thus a form of monism or pantheism, nearer to Sankara in one respect and Ramanuja in another respect. But, the soul, because of its impurities or *Mala*, does not see its identity with the Supreme Soul. These impurities are of three kinds. The first is that the soul considers the created body to be itself and feels itself to be finite and limited. Its remaining in the body is another kind of impurity. Under the influence of his organs man starts acting, giving rise to further *Karmic* impurities which can be evil or good and lead to misery or otherwise. These impurities are brought into action by *Nada*, the female or Shakti aspect of Siva. It is the female element (*Shakti*), a power of Siva, from which arises speech. With speech, ideas, the worldly life, and forms come into existence and shape. This speech, thus, becomes the origin of all impurities which lead to worldly life. The world is in one sense real but the entire approach is other-worldly and negative, since the worldly life is unwanted and an impurity. The object is to remove all these impurities. These vanish by intense contempla-

tion, i.e., by the impact of God's light on the devotee. When the individual soul is free from the world and its impurities, it becomes the Supreme Soul. There is, thus, virtual identity between the individual soul and God. Therefore, the goal of life is merger or blending with Siva. It is by our ignorance and participation in the world that we fail to recognize this identity. By intense meditation we realize that we are God ourselves and finally see our identity with Him. This school does not prescribe most of the external disciplines of other Saiva schools. Its internal disciplines are also less rigid. But, the schools of Kashmir Saivism are other-worldly, involving merger or identity with the Supreme Soul. In this background, the system is monistic or pantheistic. Obviously, the liberated soul has no social role to play.

LINGAYATS

The Lingayats sect of Saivism arose in the twelfth century A.D. It owes its separate origin and its anti-Brahmanism to one Shri Basava, who has also been dubbed as a politician. Under this system, a guru or a preceptor has to be chosen for the disciple. A ritualistic initiation ceremony is also performed. The Brahmanical rites of *Gayatrimantra* and the wearing of the sacred thread are retained. The doctrine is that the original essence of Saiva is the highest Brahman, being *Satchit-Anand*. In it exist, in their essence, all the rudiments of the universe, *Prakrti* and *Purusa*; and to the same they return at the end. The original state is, thus, non-dualistic. Later, by its power or *Shakti*, the original state is moved and becomes divided into two, Siva, the God, and the individual soul, the worshipper. In the same manner the *Shakti* or power also divides itself into two parts, one part being the *Kala* or power of Siva, and the other part transforming itself into the devotion of the individual soul. *Linga* is Siva itself and not a mere symbol of it. The individual soul has the tendency to lead itself to action and entanglement in the world. But, *Bhakti* leads to the final deliverance, because it is free from the inclination towards action and entanglement. It turns away from action and from the world and leads to deliverance. Finally, the soul unites with or merges in Siva. As before the original division into Siva and the devotee, there is again Oneness.

Here too the mystic path is one of renunciation. The original Entity becomes divided into two, God or Siva and individual souls. Six forms or aspects of God are conceived. He is distinct from the

world. One aspect of God is of being the Redeemer of souls. The progress of the individual soul is three-fold. It is happy at its union with Siva. It enjoys with Siva. Lastly, it gives up the world as unreal and illusory. The discipline involves observance of vows, restraints and rites, coupled with indifference to the world. In fact, this indifference is the first stage of the progress of the soul. Actually, the progress of the soul is for the return to Siva in the reverse order in which it emanated from Him. For one school the final goal does not mean the soul's perfect identity with the Supreme Soul. Nor is the soul's individuality lost. The system is not, thus, strictly monistic, though originally only one Essence is assumed. This school also, like the one of Ramanuja, is virtually one of qualified spiritual monism. The difference is that whereas with Ramanuja God has in Him the rudiments of the souls and the world, here God creates the soul and the world with His own power. All the same, He creates them out of Himself. Except in the use of terminology, there is no difference in the metaphysical position.

With another exponent of the system, Siva with his powers is the material cause of the world and the delivered soul is similar to the Supreme Soul. It therefore, shows that all Saiva schools advance the view of qualified spiritual monism, in the sense that Siva divides Himself into God and devotees, who, by devotion and after giving up the world, rejoin the Supreme Soul and are similar to Him.

On the social side, the *Gotra* of the guru is the *Gotra* of the followers, and there can be no marriage relation between the members of the same branch of disciples. Originally there were *five* branches or groups only. Each group has four classes, (1) Priests, (2) Pious men, (3) Traders and (4) *Pancamsalis.* The members of the first category devote themselves to contemplation and to the religious life of celibacy and asceticism. They live in separate centres or *Maths.* While the world is real, the ideal of life is release from the bondage of life. God is virtually the material cause of the world, or creates it by His power. The souls have separate existence even after the mystic achievement. There is no emphasis on social conduct either before or after the mystic union.

SAKTAS

In the Sakta school the deity is Parvati, Uma, Durga, Kali or Mahakali, the consorts of Siva. Originally, these goddesses had different historical antecedents, their areas of worship being both

aboriginal and native. The word *Shakti* means power. Therefore, the power or *Shakti* of willing, acting, creating has naturally been indicated by the name of a female goddess. In consonance with the traditional backgrounds, the female goddesses are worshipped according to different mystic practices, varying from Tantric to sensual and erotic. Siva and Shakti are the two faces of the Reality. They interpenetrate, divine and sub-divide into *Nada*, *Bindu*, etc. These unite, re-form and express themselves into the world. In this system the emphasis is on the female element of the deity which is supposed to be very predominant. The worship is generally ritualistic and has led to very indecent and abhorrent erotic forms of practices. Shaktism and Tantrism are typical examples that give the lesson that devotional worship with mystic practices, unless yoked to the will of God to do his work in the universe, often leads to meaningless or degrading emotionalism or eroticism. There are no caste distinctions during the course of worship, but those are resumed when the worship is over.

GANPATAYAS

The sect of *Ganpatayas* are ritualistic in their worship, involving use of various foods and materials and repetition of *Mantras* and meditations. Their other beliefs and approach are generally the same as of other Saiva sects.

We find that in the Vedic period, Rudra appeared in the *Upanisad* speculation and became a God of the universe. Later, he was deemed to be a beneficent god. In his wild nature he appeared in the *Pasupata* system and the other systems mentioned earlier. These systems, ranging between the second century B.C. and the 12th century A.D. adopted methods of worship which were other-worldly, ritualistic and some even wild and queer. These schools were generally pantheistic or dualistic. The two Kashmir schools are comparatively moderate and sober in their practices, though they too are ritualistic, ascetic and meditational in their approach. The Kashmir school is in its overall concepts, monistic, though an escape from spiritual monism has been provided by allowing individual existence to the delivered souls. Then came the Lingayata school in which God is everything. He is the Creator of the world and the Instructor and Redeemer of mankind. The individual soul is eternal, and seeks, through meditational, ascetic and ritualistic practices, divorce from the world and blissful union with God. The approach is to withdraw from the world. Lingayatas

pursue devotional worship. To an extent they departed from the Brahmanical system, but some aspects of the caste system and distinctions between the priests and other classes continue. In the Sakta school, God is worshipped mostly as *Shakti*, the consort of Siva. In some of these systems, the practice of animal and even human sacrifices continues, as also other sensual and debasing rites and modes of worship. The Saktas look forward to an identity with God as goal of life. The Saiva systems in their mystic and devotional aspects present a general unity or similarity regarding their metaphysical views and interpretations. But, in regard to their modes of worship and deliverance of the soul, there are considerable variations. Whereas in the older Saiva systems the assumption of eternal *Pradhana* was made to show the separate and dualistic character of the world, in Kashmir and other Saivisms of later growth, the world was created by the power of God and the separate identity of the soul was generally maintained. In all these systems, the world was taken to be real, but activity in it had no relevance, it being only a distraction and wasteful involvement. For, release from the world was the mystic goal. The released soul, though it has almost all the attributes of the Supreme Soul, has a separate identity. But this identity has no social relevance. All these systems, whether dualistic or not, clearly belong to the class of mysticism of Isolation.

SOUTHERN SAIVISM

For a number of reasons, Saivism in the South has a special significance. Like the Alvar saints, the Saiva saints were quite popular in South India. There was considerable rivalry between the Saiva and the Vaisnava saints. Probably because of it, they have formalised their practices and traditions into a separate Saiva system. Unlike Vaisnavism, their system is not much priest-ridden. Nor do Saivites, for that matter, observe caste restrictions very rigidly. Out of the orthodox systems, it is considered to be the most theistic system in India. It would, therefore, be fruitful to consider it in some detail.

In theory this system is linked with Kashmir Saivism. These Saivas accept the scriptural authority both of the *Vedas*, including the *Upanisads*, and of the *Agamas*. Their assumption is that there can be no difference between the two, both being revealed scriptures. In addition, the Saiva *Sidhanta Shastras*, written by Saiva saints and theologians, form another authority for the system.

In its metaphysical assumptions the system is quite allied with the Kashmir Saivism and in one respect even with Ramanuja's Vishisht Advaita. There are three elements : God (*Pati*), souls (*Pasu*) and the fetters or the world (*Pasa*). The soul is eternal and has spiritual energy. It is eternally united with God. It is divine. After liberation it has a life common with God. According to one view, the One becomes Many. Siva becomes the world. But, like the world, the souls are dependent on God. *Shakti* is the body or power of Siva through which all changes are brought about.[2]

The soul has three stages of development. In its primitive state (*Kevala*) it is isolated, ignorant, passive and actionless. In its second stage it is involved in the world or fetters. This activity in the world constitutes ties of *Karma*, which create further bondage for the soul. The third stage is the one of deliverance from the world and all activities therein. It is assumed that in its worldly form the soul is shrouded by *Anavam* like husk round the grain. It is this *Anavam* which has a darkening influence on the soul. It does not permit it to see things clearly. It is only by the grace of God that the soul can be liberated from this *Anavam* and the bondage of the world or *Samsara*.[3]

The world being a place of suffering, the goal is to seek release for the soul so that it could join Siva. The idea of bondage and the world being an evil is inherent in the system. *Anavam* is co-eternal with the soul, something like the *Prakrti* in Sankhya. The world is real, but sometimes it has also been described as an illusion and a mirage. We cannot deny, says Umapati, the existence of the misery of birth from which Siva alone can deliver man. Prayer is made for deliverance from the pain of birth.[4]

Saiva *Agamas* have four parts. One part (*Jnana-pada*) deals with theology. The second part (*Yoga-pada*) gives meditational and Yogic practices. The third part (*Kriya-Pada*) indicates the art of constructing temples and idols. The fourth part (*Karya-pada*) pertains to religious and ritualistic practices for release of the soul.[5]

The method of *Bhakti* is fourfold. (1) The first stage is called *Karya*. It involves general or indirect service of the deity like sweeping and cleaning the temple, supplying it with flowers and looking after the flower garden, singing, etc. (2) The second stage, *kriya*, means direct service. It includes worship of the idol by offering flowers and incense and doing oblations and the like. There are detailed rules and rituals for the modes of worship, the visits to the temple and the construction of temples and idols. Other rituals and *Mantras* are also prescribed and the benefit of each is

mentioned. The first stage of *Bhakti* is as between the servant and the master. The second stage is as between the son and the parents. (3) The third stage is called *Yokam* or Yoga. It is the stage of contemplation, control of senses and breath, and the concentration of the mind on God. This is *Bhakti* as between friends. The first three are preparatory stages of *Bhakti*. (4) The final stage is called *Jnana* or *Nanam*. This involves blissful union with Siva. At this stage the reading of scriptures is given up. But, this union is entirely an act of grace on the part of Siva. This Saiva system excludes all other modes of *Moksa* except of loving *Bhakti*. It believes that love is God's chief characteristic.[6]

Like other Saiva systems, the approach is completely other-worldly, since the world is called fetters or a bondage. One has to give up the mirage of the activity of the senses and the agency of deeds. These only involve a person further in the tangles of *Karma*. Therefore, the phenomenal world has to be avoided as a mirage and an involvement. The entire approach is ritualistic and formal. Even the repetition of *Mantras* is prescribed for release from the pain of birth in the world and its activities. We give two statements of Saiva saints indicating their anxiety for deliverance from the world and faith in ritual worship. The prayer is for "the favour of release from the sorrow of rebirth". "If you worship with golden fair flowers, our Friend in the beautiful (abode of) *Arur*, you will attain bliss everlasting".[7] In the *Siddhanta* it is mentioned that once the soul realises its difference from the world, it rejects the world.

Three kinds of impurities bind man. They are : (1) egoism, (2) action or *Karma*, (3) *Mayai* or psychosomatic organism. All these have to be shed.[8] With the help of the guru and the grace of Siva, the duality between God and the soul is removed. Siva *Bhakti* involves : (1) alienation from non-self or world, (2) alienation from the ego, (3) alienation from the subject-object notion of God.[9] The last item suggests identity between the soul and God and the idea of "I am Brahman". Even the concentration on or *Mantra* or 'I am He' or 'He is I' is suggested at the final stage of *Bhakti*. One gets the feeling of 'I am that'. There is unity in the ontological structure between the soul and God.[10] An important aspect of the Siva *Bhakti* is that there is no emphasis on moral life, because all action, whether good or bad, leads to *Karma* and bondage.[11] The soul's nature is to be united with God and not to be associated with the impurities of the world. The approach is of complete rejection of life and of absorption in formal and

devotional worship. Tiruviarilpayam says that there is no remedy against the disease of embodiment except the grace of God.

The goal of life is soul's blissful union with Siva. There is considerable confusion as to whether this involves merger or identity with Siva or just a union. The description of this state in the Saiva literature would suggest both the inferences. We have stated that the metaphysical position is also indicative of pantheism. It has been clearly stated that the One becomes Many and Siva becomes the world. The nature of the soul is deemed to be divine. The aim is that the soul should realise its own nature and identity and not lose itself in the world. That realisation involves alienation from the world and unification with Siva. Dhavamony, who has made a detailed study of the issue, believes that it is not theism in the normal sense. But, it is pantheism in the sense that the soul is divine even before its release. Its liberation lies only in its self-realisation of its real nature and its disconnection with the world. It has been repeatedly said that in the final state the soul loses the distinction between the knower and the known, the subject and the object and between the God and the devoteee. Even oneness, unity and identity in the ontological structure have been mentioned. In addition, we find that the soul dissociates itself completely from the world as in the case of Sankhya and other isolation and monistic mysticisms. All these facts, and a pantheistic strain in its metaphysics, would suggest that the final experience is of interpenetration or absorption. It is a state of oneness with something that is transcendent to the empirical self. The soul is one with God, not separate. Like the Advaitin, the devotee meditates with the idea of "He is I" and 'I am He". Similes of scent and flower, Sun and rays, juice and fruit have been given.[12] At the same time, it has been asserted that this stage is not of identity. It is oneness of union and not oneness of being. Since the basic relation is of love, it is between two entities, God and the soul. The latter, even-though filled with God, does not lose its identity. Though the soul has all the attributes of God, it still has not the power to create and destroy. In this background, one is inclined to accept the conclusion of Dhavamony that it is a case of panentheism. The final state is of oneness between God and the soul, but it is not of ontological identity, even though the distinction between the subject and the object and the knower and the known is lost and descriptions indicating identity have been given.

As already stated, the *Jivanmukta* has no role to play in life.

He dissociates himself from all good or bad actions and all deeds in life. In fact, a alienation from the world is a pre-requisite of God-realisation. All the same, the *Jivanmukta* does perform the devotional duties at the temple. The Bhakta forgets the world. He rests, is free from all work and withdraws from all sense-experiences.

The above discussion points out unambiguously that it is a mysticism of Rest or Isolation, as is the system of Ramanuja. In both the cases, the soul remains calm and tranquil and in union and bliss. The reason for this similarity is also clear. In the case of Vedantism, Vaisnavism and Saivism, the scriptures are the same, namely, the *Vedas* and the *Upanisads*. They are all orthodox systems. The minor variations in the metaphysical viewpoints are due only to the different interpretations that are put on the same scriptures.

8

Buddhism[1]

Buddha appeared in the 6th century B.C. when Jainism was already a prevailing religion. There is little doubt that Buddhism arose as the result of the mystic experience, or what is termed as the enlightenment, of Buddha. And, yet, Buddhism is a typical example of how historians tend to trace the birth of Buddhism as a reaction to the various environmental forces like the excessive and morbid asceticism of Jainism, the extreme ritualism of the *Vedas*, or the Brahman doctrine of the early *Upanisads*. Others find the Jainic and the Buddhist influence in the doctrines of the later *Upanisads*, even though neither Buddha refers to the *Upanisads*, nor do the later *Upanisads* mention him. While there are many varieties of the Buddhist mysticism, we shall deal broadly with only three, namely Hinayana, Mahayana and Zen.

HINAYANA

Hinayana, or the smaller vehicle, is probably the oldest, and was very much prevalent in South India. Its world-view, traced as it is mainly to the words of Buddha, is simple and emphatic. The world is a continuously changing and becoming phenomenon without any permanent content. Man has no identity, soul or self of his own. Life, like the running river, is never the same entity or being again. We have, thus, only a false sense of "I", there being no abiding individual or soul. Yet, there is something permanent and real as apart from these changing phenomena of life and the universe. Buddha himself clearly refers to it : "Were it not for this unborn, *not-become*, *not-made*, *uncompounded*, no escape could be shown for what is born, has become, is made, is compounded."[2] Life is not real in the sense that it is without any abiding substance or permanent content. It is, therefore, a suffering. The good lies in the realisation that nothing is permanent and that birth and death are both a suffering. Life is worthless and an evil. All the same, life is not considered completely an illusion. In fact, the position

is midway between complete nihilism and realism.

The cardinal principles or truths of Buddhism are three, (1) *Dukha*, (2) *Anicca* and (3) *Anatta*, or suffering, impermanence and non-"I". The knowledge of these things is knowledge of the truth. There are four truths : there is suffering, suffering has a cause, it can be suppressed, and there is a way to do so.

Birth and death, pain and pleasure, and life are all a suffering or *Dukha*. There can be no death without birth, nor pain without pleasure, nor sorrow without love; both go hand in hand, being the two ends of the same process. It is the will to life that is the root cause of all desires and sufferings. As such, all life is evil and a suffering. Gautma spoke, "What is impermanent is ill. What is ill is not the self. What is not self is not mine."[3] As soon as the desires are removed, there is no suffering. Suffering is both the symptom and the disease. One has to understand that all joy is changing, it cannot be grasped. All sorrow is self-inflicted. The water in the great ocean is less than our tears. In this world there is no escape from suffering. Life is condemned to suffering. But it is self-inflicted because it is inherent in the concept of 'I'. Life is all a becoming. It never attains a being. All this has to be realised. There can be no pleasure in life.

Anicca or impermanence is the law of life. Life (*Samsara*) is an eternal succession of events or becoming. It has to be understood that life is impermanent and a suffering. Release from it has to be sought. This knowledge shows a way out to *Nirvana*. Everything is real and nothing is real, are two extreme views, i.e., realism and nihilism. Buddha's way is the middle one. Everything is in a flux, without beginning or end. There is no static moment when becoming becomes a being. It is all a succession of instants and consciousnesses. There is no one consciousness. Everything lasts for an instant only and then ends. There is no man; only the character lasts. Each instant is determined by the pre-existent conditions. The cause of suffering is that we feel there is an 'I' which suffers. We feel the consciousness of a soul, but there is nothing of the kind. It is from this ignorance that the thought arises that there is an entity or 'I'. Actually, there is none. The thought of entity, individuality or 'I' arises in all life. Thus arise desires on that account. Accordingly, life is inseparable from suffering and evil.[4] It is this 'I', and cravings for life, that cause evil and suffering. This has to be realised and the cause leading to the sense of 'I' removed.

The third doctrine is of *Anatta*, i.e., there is no self or soul.

The world is empty of soul, self or ego. Mental states are also a becoming or a changing phenomenon. There is no continuity. Nothing underlies it. Sorrow arises from this change. Life is not real. In fact, the will to life or birth is the cause of all suffering. There is no soul, no 'I', in life. All pleasure is the other end of pain. And yet Buddhism is not nihilistic. On the issue of self, the Buddhist stand, while it is quite pragmatic, is, to an extent, ambiguous and conflicting. The Buddhists, while they deny a permanent entity, accept a continuity of experience. If there is no self, there cannot be any self to experience or to realise that there is no self. Regarding moral responsibility, *Hinayana* rigidly believes that it is the individual who is responsible for his deeds. There is a single line of *Karamic* effect. It is the individual, not his parents, who is responsible for all his misdeeds, past or present. It is he who is answerable for his evil acts. Yet Buddha even says that he had never heard the view that there is no 'self-agency'.[5] Further, it is also stated that one has to realize *Nirvana* by one's own efforts. "Evil is done by the self, by the self one comes to grief, by the self is one purified." "No one can purify another."[6] No one else can help him. These assertions assume some sort of a 'self-agency', who earns and seeks *Nirvana*, and is punished and suffers for his bad deeds. This doctrine of individual responsibility forms the basis of the Buddhist ethics and its stress on moral life. Not only that, Buddha would seem to assume even a 'Higher Self '. At the time of his death, he advised, "Live as those who have the Self as Lamp, the Self as refuge and no other." *Dhammapada* records, "Self is the Lord of the self. Self is the goal of self."[7] So while the impermanence of self is emphasised, an equal stress is laid that 'one' has to suffer for his lack of knowledge and misdeeds, and 'one' alone has to seek and gain *Nirvana*.

The goal is *Nirvana* or release from *Samsara*, or the world, or the fetters of the false notion of 'I'. It is entirely an other-worldly goal. Release from the bondage and sufferings of the world has to be sought. Accordingly, the methods of release are essentially ascetic and other-worldly. The way out or the path is fourfold. The first step is freedom from the delusion of 'self ', 'I' or the reality of its existence, simultaneously discarding the need or value of rites and rituals. This follows from keeping good company, hearing the law, reflection on it and the practice of virtue.

The eight-fold path of right understanding, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration is recommended. Meditation and concen-

tration are essential. Mind is withdrawn from outside and concentrated on one point, so that one is unconscious of things around him, and even of his own self.

There are three cosmic realms; the world of senses and desires; the world of form in which residue of form is there, but the senses of touch, taste and smell are eliminated; and the world of no-form. The last one is still a stage of the cosmos or *Samsara.* The five hindrances in the progress of meditation are craving, ill-will, sloth, restless brooding and doubt. At earlier stages, love, compassion and sympathy for others are developed. Finally, all thinking, joy and happiness disappear, and one is pure, tranquil and indifferent to pain and pleasure. Each of these stages is sub-divided into four stages. Each of them has to be transcended to achieve *Nirvana.*

Buddha's is a monastic system for those who want liberation. Salvation can be achieved only through his system. For the layman it is only a question of rebirth according to his merits. Early Buddhism, like Jainism, was far-removed from morality, since good deeds as much as bad ones involved re-birth, except that good deeds brought a favourable re-birth. Good is like the raft, says Buddha, which can be used for the journey, but given up when the shore is reached. The raft is of present value only.[8] For *Nirvana*, withdrawal from life is essential. Naturally, in any such system, renunciation and asceticism are a necessary prerequisite. It is not the job of the hermit to establish order in the world. Being ascetic is good for all men as a discipline and a training for life. In all monastic life priority is given to the ideal of knowledge and asceticism and not love.[9] All our ideas of unselfishness are a delusion. There is no gift except to the giver. Just as hospitals provide food and health for the body, monasteries provide spiritual food and health for the seekers. In any case, for the attainment of *Nirvana*, entry into a monastery is essential and the world has to be given up.[10]

The *ethics of a monastery* involves; (1) no killing, (2) no theft, (3) no unchastity, (4) no falsehood, (5) no liquors, (6) no eating between meals, (7) no handling of money or use of jewellery, (8) the use of simple garments and bed. Laymen are also asked to observe the first five rules. Marriage is not attacked. But family and secular life cannot lead to salvation. It can lead only to rebirth and suffering. The best life is that of the wanderer or *Bhikkhu.* The homeless wandering ascetic is both a teacher and a pupil. Unchastity is a cardinal sin.[11]

In Buddhism reason is supreme. Those who find reason inadequate are not Buddhists.[12] There is need for the moral standard. The highest form of conscience arises from intuition or feeling of identity with all. Reason is the conscience, since all selfishness is ignorance, there being no self. The standard is of *Arhat* or *Nirvana*, of a tranquil mind delivered from all desires. A person with this aim must act with restraint and reason. It is the standard of an internal categorical imperative. There is another aspect as well. Love cannot be idle. It is spontaneous; it does not arise from reflection. This compassion in *Mahayana* is called *Bodhi-chitta*. It is in harmony with *Nirvana*.

Meditation and contemplation are part of the discipline. These daily meditations are like prayers for developing *bhavana* of kindness, compassion, impartiality and sympathy, i.e., of goodwill for all life. These meditational methods can be practised by all men. They only lead to heaven or *Brahm-loka*. Ultimately, these methods and meditations have to be given up, for all such thoughts are directed to other persons and not to *Nirvana*. And one must reach *Nirvana* where nothing needs ever to be done. For *Nirvana*, both bad and good states of mind have to be shed. *Jana* and *Dhyana*, almost identical with the Yogic meditation, is practised. All mental activity, as in the Yoga, has to be stopped. All self-thinking, being a hindrance, has to be given up. These meditations lead to stations of Infinity of Space, of Intellection, of Emptiness, of neither Consciousness nor Non-consciousness. These lead to worlds of re-becoming, not *Nirvana*. Further meditations lead to the world of Form and No-form, and finally to *Nirvana*.

The Buddhist *Bhikhshu* is a reversion of one step from the Upanisadic hermit. The wanderer has to help others. They organize a *Bhikhshu Sangha*. The wanderers are its members. Layman can also join monastic life. In the case of the hermit it is only an individual effort. Here they live in bands but in separate buildings. They live in an ascetic form and take vows of celibacy and poverty (non-possession). They beg for their food. For gross breaches of discipline like un-chastity, theft, killing, etc., the *Bhikhshu* is removed from the *Sangha*. Only eight items of property are allowed. Buddhists suggest that they should give alms to all. No one should denounce others in order to extol one's own sect. But, "void are the systems of other teachers, void of true saints," says Gautama.[13]

Progress occurs by stages. Finally, one becomes an *Arhat* and

is ready for final release or *Nirvana*. It is only at this stage that one is free from all desires, including the desire for rebirth in worlds of Form or No-form. One is free from pride and ignorance, even the pride of virtue. Instead, one has, without measure and distinction, goodwill for all beings. One is really awake and is holy. One becomes an *Arhat* when the five evils of delusion of the self or soul, doubts, belief in the utility of rites, desires and resentment are gone. The removal of the other five evils of desire for life in the world of matter, or in the spiritual world, pride, self-righteousness, and ignorance, is the fruit of the fourth stage or *Arhat*. After it, one achieves *Nirvana*. Sometimes the stage of *Arhat* and of *Nirvana* are treated as the same. At other times, it is felt that the *Arhat* has still to break some fetters. The main sins are : (1) sensuality, lust and desires, (2) the will to life and desire for rebirth, (3) ignorance and the ignorance of the four truths, and (4) false opinions. *Nirvana* is the final stage of release from the ten fetters and sins mentioned above. The ten fetters keep man in bondage, and the four-fold path of Buddha leads to the release of *Nirvana*. This final stage of the superman can be reached in life and even after-life. From the final stage of *Nirvana* there is no retrun.

The above doctrines determine the basis for all Buddhist religious practices and institutions. The worldly life is, thus, unwanted, and Buddha himself left it never to retrun to it. There is no soul to be rescued and none transmigrates, unlike what is stated in the *Gita*, where the body is deemed to be a garment of the soul. But, there is only the transmigration of character. One flame lights the other one and dies itself. Only momentum is passed, not any substance. The future behaviour of man is very largely determined by his past. All the same, it does not exclude effort or personal responsibility. True, the order of the present is determined, but not mechanically. What has been sown has to be reaped. Hence the responsibility of making the right effort. The present is governed by the past, but the future has to be made by oneself. Despite the denial of the soul, Buddhism retains the single-line sequence of events as the cause of the present individual character. It is not the result of the interaction of different lines of character. Nor is it a new combination. But, it hardly makes a difference whether the present is the result of one past line of events or it is the net result of a combination of interacting forces or lives. The belief is that my blindness is due to me and not to my parents. In Vedanta or Brahmanism, it is the soul, the spirit,

the astral, or the subtle body, which carries the effect of past *Karma*. But Buddhism, while it denies such a soul, does by implication concede the presence of some kind of a character which cannot be ended by suicide, but must be ended by *Nirvana*. That is why Buddhism objects to suicide. Buddhism also concedes lower worlds than the one of *Nirvana*. It accepts that the 'Form world' and the 'Non-form world' are the fruits of virtues and merits. One is reborn there for good actions. Those with merit, who do not achieve *Nirvana*, are born in higher planes. Achievements of life in these planes are open both to wanderers and house-holders, for these are the rewards of good deeds.

The goal of life is *Nirvana*. It can be reached in life or after death. It is not the dying out of the self, as no self is assumed. It is a stage normally to be reached here. It was so reached by Buddha and others. *Nirvana* is a state, undefiled, everywhere, deathless, tranquil and blissful, but it is not heaven. Anyone who orders his life aright and emancipates his mind with virtue can reach it anywhere. It is the dying out of the sense of ego, of desires and lust, and even of the will to life. It is an ineffable and endless security, deliverance and detachment. It is release from the sense of individuality or becoming.[14]

There are eight stations of deliverance : (1) having oneself an external form one sees forms, (2) unware of one's own external form, one sees forms external to oneself, (3) aesthetic hypnosis, (4) abiding in infinite space, (5) abiding in the sphere of infinite cognition, (6) abiding in the sphere of nothingness, (7) abiding in the sphere of neither ideation nor non-ideation, (8) abiding where the senses and ideas have ceased to be.[15] Here the fetters of becoming are destroyed. It is not an 'I', better than 'I' or less than 'I'. In fact, the emancipation is from *Mana* or the conceit of 'I', or '*ego*'. Nothing of 'I' is left. There is no thought like "I have attained it". It is the delight of freedom from craving, evil, rebirth, or continued becoming. There is nothing to look forward to; it has been gained. It is a goal one reaches by one's own effort. To the question whether one exists after death, Buddha replied, "I do not say he exists; nor that he does not exist, nor that one exists and does not exist, nor that he neither exists nor does not exist. I have not said any of these things." "He who has disappeared has no form. That 'he is' exists for him no more.[16] All matter and conditioning are cut off. There is no trace of him." This is the condition after death. In life his condition is of the potter's wheel. The answer is the same both in the Vedanta and in Buddhism. The

"will to life" has ceased. But, till death, the effect of the past *Karma* goes on like the movement of the potter's wheel after the potter removes his hand from it. He knows things as they are. *Nirvana* enlightens his remaining life. He has no fear or grief. He has, but for an instant, realised, the Abyss where there is no becoming. But, there is no thought of 'I have experienced it'. He can go to the Abyss and return and can command re-entry into it. According to Coomaraswamy, this state is not continuous because he can go and return. But, the Buddhists claim that it is a continuous experience of rapture. It is co-existent with the temporal consciousness and life. But, it has also been stated in the Buddhist literature that Buddha went into it and came out. Coomaraswamy feels that *Nirvana* is continuous only after life. Here one gets in and out again in life. Continuous realisation, he feels, can take place only after death. He is a man in whom the 'will to life' has ceased. He is here in the eyes of others, but he is not maintained by a will to live. He is living like the potter's wheel, with the potter's hand lifted. According to the Buddhists, he can consciously coexist both in Byss and Abyss.[17] He is free in both ways. But Coomaraswamy considers that 'free in both ways' does not mean 'free in both the worlds'. It means that the deliverance is both psychological and ethical. He can pass from one world to the other. But, if it is so, does it mean that this freedom is lost after death. If so, it means that *Nirvana* in life is greater than the limited one after death, from which there is no return. Or does it imply that, even after death, the *Nirvana* touches both life and death, and that the emancipated individual still sees things as they are. Actually, it is all Void, for no individual, who sees as the erstwhile individual did, is now in the infinite Void. The subject and object are unified in Abyss. It is a plane which can be described only in negative terms. It is something beyond the categories of space. It is neither consciousness nor non-consciousness, nor nothingness. Buddha describes his experience : "I reached in experience the *Nirvana* which is unborn, unrivalled, secure from attachment, undecaying and unstained. The condition is indeed reached by me which is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond the reach of mere logic, subtle, and to be realised only by the wise."[18] This description is clearly of the Reality which is positive, but which can be described only in negative terms, being transcendent and ineffable. Buddha never stated whether the one who has achieved *Nirvana* exists or not after death. For him the description of existence or non-existence does not apply. Buddha

stated : "No measuring is there of him who has disappeared, whereby one might know of him that he is not; when all qualities are removed." Such a man is, "incomprehensible even when he actually is present." Such a person "cannot be held to be perceived as existing in truth and reality even in this life.[19] The separate individuality of the person is gone. He is detached. But it is the highest good and the highest form of life." *Nirvana* appears nothing to the world, but to men of wisdom it is all things. The use of negative terms of description does not imply that the state of freedom involves a loss for those who find it. This freedom cannot be a loss. Being a transcendent state, it can be described only negatively as Nothing or Void. But it is Everything. The description of the state given by Behmen is similar to that given by the Buddhists : "It is a super-sensual, supernatural Abyss with no ground or Byss to stand on. It is nothing because it cannot be described by or likened to anything. It is free from all things, God that cannot be described or expressed. He who finds it, for him there is nothing more True. It is the beginning of all things and Rules everything. All things end in it. It is the Circle in which are all things. All things are from it, in it and by it, and in which they submit.[20] The Buddhist saint, like the Christian, is, thus in effect finally transformed in union with the Supreme and Ultimate Reality.

Coomaraswamy feels that the object of the Buddhist ethics is not to create order in the world. Buddha was not a social reformer to do justice in society or redress inequality in social life. Buddha's message is for those potentially fit for *Nirvana*, already mature to an extent for release.[21] But, this view is only partly correct. Buddha's stress on ethics was for greater than that of his contemporary systems. The practice of an ethical living was essential for his system. True, moral life, according to him, did not achieve *Nirvana*, but it prepared the person for it. Secondly, his insistence on personal responsibility for one's action laid a good basis for moral life in the country. Buddhism contributed very significantly to the moral life of the times. It prescribed duties for all, servants, children, parents, wives, masters, and equals. It also laid down rules for the general social and moral life of the community. Emphasis was laid on the virtues of compassion, love and gentleness. These virtues "free the soul and comprise, all good works" and "give light and radiance to men". It is Buddha who spoke, "A man becomes not a Brahmin by his plaited hair or by his birth; in whom is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he a Brahmin."[22] The enormous impact of Buddhism on the social and

political life of the community would never have been there unless moral life had been preached by Buddha as an essential step on the path to *Nirvana*. It is a creed which shaped the Asian civilisation for centuries. It produced Ashoka, one of the greatest emperors and religious teachers of all time. It is only in this sense that we can understand why, after his enlightenment, Buddha spent decades in preaching and organisation of the *Sangha*.

In early Buddhism there is not much sympathy for women. This is a sign of all monastic life everywhere in the world. Woman is a temptress. Buddha felt women were soon angered. They were stupid, passionate and comparatively sensuous. "Shun gaze of women, Ananda", says Buddha, "or watch when you speak to them." Buddha wanted all monks to be celibate. He had no duty towards the race. He had only compassion for the fallen who could not be celibate and were entrapped in their own infatuation.[23] Buddha was originally reluctant to admit women to the *Sangha*. For he deemed it to be a mistake to do so. Later he admitted them. But by their admission to the *Sangha*, he felt that his religion would endure only for five hundred years instead of the anticipated one thousand years. The sisters appointed in the *Sangha* were junior to the brothers.

This kind of attitude towards the world led to general other-worldliness, pessimism and disdain for life. A Buddhist feels, "This body vile doth touch me only with distance and shame." Buddhists were so much against the sorrow of the world that they had no regard for joy, which was for them the other end of sorrow. Naturally, the early Buddhist literature has contempt for the world and no sympathy for its hopes. Hinayana Buddhism is monastic and puritanical.[24] But later Mahayana and Zen developed some reconciliation with the world. All the same, suicide is condemned and life is considered to be an opportunity. Buddha considered common life as not worth living. It was no life for an Ariya since the conditioned life could not be happy.[25] There is over-emphasis on *Dukha* or suffering. Early Buddhists disturbed pleasure and looked only on the dark side of life.[26] For them a man without passion does not permit good or evil to disturb his equanimity. According to Deussen, Hinayana Buddhism made selfishness of escape and emancipation from the sufferings of life, as the mainspring of existence.[27] Ordinary life is considered worthless. In Buddhism the main concern is not for order in the world.[28] It gave serious thought to it; for, good government and social order did not lead to *Nirvana*. Like Jesus, Buddha gave no thought to social

order in the world. His concern was only for *Nirvana*. All the same, the contribution of Buddhism to social and moral life has been very considerable. Apart from contribution in the field of medicine and literature, it promoted the ethics of compassion, truth and sympathy, reverence and restraint. Hinayana Buddhism virtually excludes all reconciliation between religion and the world. *It does not contemplate the possibility of freedom for the householders and for those in the world*. The Buddhists reject the world as evil. Both Sankara and Buddha want the becoming state to be avoided.[29] The Upanisads say that salvation by knowledge and asceticism is the only way.[30] Gautama would not have left the world, if he had felt that it was useful to be a king and suffering was due to external causes. Buddha regards the state of the world as hopeless, evil and irremediable.[31] According to Boquet it is clearly an ideal of absorption or merger in the Absolute.[32] Without doubt it is a mysticism of Merger.

MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

Mahayana, the greater vehicle, is said to be for the salvation of one and all, as against the Hinayana, the smaller vehicle, which is for the few who have no need for worship and are willing to renounce the world, they being already mature for salvation.[33] Another view is that Mahayana is a response to the needs of the laity who need a religion of worship, faith and myth and cannot follow the path of knowledge. To us this view appears to be a crude oversimplification. Both Hinayana and Mahayana owe their systems and practices to the life and sayings of Buddha. Buddha's long preaching campaign, his emphasis on ethical living and his organisation of the *Sangha* clearly indicate that he was very considerably interested in the fate of man in general. It was Buddha who spoke : "There is an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not, O Bhikhsus, this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated and unformed there would be no escape from the world of the born, originated, created, formed."[34] The Buddhist vow was, "I take refuge in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha." These words used in the life time of Buddha created the seed of Mahayana.[35] The theoretical belief is that after *Nirvana* the superman is not interested in doing any good; and yet it was after his enlightenment that Buddha preached and organised his system and sought to show to mankind the way of release or escape from suffering into the realm of the "unborn, unformed and uncreated". While both

Hinayana and Mahayana trace their systems to the preachings of Buddha, the latter is certainly more in line with the life actually lived by Buddha. In fact, Mahayana is the logical culmination of the Buddhist vow quoted above. Later, the Buddha designate became *Bodhisattva*, the greatest *Arhat* of his own type. All Buddhas preach the same doctrine. Mahayana offers salvation through love and also through knowledge to all and everyone. In Hinayana, the stress is on knowledge and *Nirvana* is not developed positively. But, Mahayana stresses love and salvation for all. Compared to Hinayana some of its doctrines are indeed revolutionary.

In its metaphysical aspect it makes the world less real than that of Hinayana. In fact, the world is considered illusory.[36] The cheif philosopher of Mahayana is Nagarjuna who propounded the philosophy of the middle way. Reality is not Nothing; but, it can be described only in negative ways. It is ineffable. It is neither existence nor non-existence *Nirvana* is thus Positive not Nothing.[37] It simply comes to be realised as soon as ignorance that obstructs freedom is overcome. It transcends Being and Non-Being.

Where knowledge and love meet that is *Nirvana*. *Nirvana* is Void because it has no limitation or predication. Nagarjuna says that *Nirvana* or Absolute involves eight points (1) No birth, (2) No death, (3) No beginning, (4) No ending, (5) No unity, (6) No plurality, (7) No coming into existence, and (8) No going out of existence.[38] Things neither exist, nor do they not exist, i.e., of that which is other than phenomenal, there cannot be a predication of existence or non-existence. While from the standpoint of the Absolute, there can be no existence, from the standpoint of the relative they have a relative being. *Nirvana* and *Samsara* are the same. It results in the paradox of *Samsara* and *Nirvana* being identical, and in the non-distinction of the shown and the unshown. The worldly life is the activity of *Nirvana* itself. There is no distinction between the two. Becoming is also *Nirvana*. The same is the centre of Suchness and also of Birth and Death. They are not one, nor are they separate. If truth is not in everyday existence, it will be found nowhere else.[39] The Yogachara school of *Asanga* and *Vasubandhu* describes Reality as neither Unity nor Many. It is real and eternal, calm, free and wise. It is of the nature of Mind, something like pure consciousness in its unbroken unity, beyond time and space. This Universal Mind is also the Store Consciousness.[40] According to this school there is a Cosmic Mind. It is an All-containing, Ever-Enduring Mind. All things exist in it.

Forms of all things are in the Cosmic Mind in ideality. These are Platonic ideas. It is all ideas, but ignorance and illusion raise these ideas to a phenomenal universe.[41] It is a positive system. True, there are no individual selves but things should be seen in their unity. That is the way to see them. Truly, there is only one self, the Absolute. Time and change, birth and death, multiplicity of things, arise from the Basic Reality. One can see this Reality only intuitively.[42] Our mind, seeing things externally, sees them wrong and thus suffers pain.

This is what Suzuki writes on the above issue : "Buddhist philosophy, is the philosophy of Suchness, a philosophy of Emptiness, or a philosophy of Self-identity. It starts from the absolute present which is pure experience, an experience in which there is yet no differentiation of subject and object, and yet which is not a state of sheer nothingness."[43] "Relativity is an aspect of Reality but it is not Reality." As one is in the many, many must be in the one. The many made the one possible. Absolute is in the relative and relative is in the absolute. The *gahakaraka*, detected by Buddha, is "our relative, empirical ego, and the mind freed from its binding conditions (*sankhara*) is the Absolute ego, *Atman,* as it is elucidated in the *Nirvana Sutra.* Enlightenment consists in seeing into the meaning of life as the interplay of the relative ego with the Absolute ego. In other words, enlightenment is seeing the Absolute ego as reflected in the relative ego and acting through it. Or we may express the idea in this way : The Absolute ego creates the relative ego in order to see itself reflected in it, that is, in the relative ego. The Absolute ego, as long as it remains absolute has no means whereby to assert itself, to manifest itself, to work out all its possibilities. It requires a *gahakaraka* to, execute its biddings."[44] There is something common between our sense experience and the enlightenment-experience. "I do not know if it is correct to call this kind of unconscious the Cosmic Unconscious. The reason I like to call it so is that we generally call the relative field of consciousness vanishes away somewhere into the unknown, and this unknown, once recognized, enters into ordinary consciousness and puts in good order all the complexities there which have been tormenting us to greater or lesser degrees. The unknown thus gets related to our mind, and, to that extent, unknown, and mind must be somehow of the same nature and cherish a mutual communication. We can thus state that our limited consciousness, inasmuch as we know its limitation, leads us to all sorts of worry, fear, unsteadiness. But as soon as it is realized

that our consciousness comes out of something which, though not known in the way relative things are known, is intimately related to us, we are relieved of every form of tension and are thoroughly at rest and at peace with ourselves and with the world generally."[45] "Our everyday mind," or our daily experience, or our instinctive acts, as far as they are considered in themselves, have no special value and significance. They acquire these only when they are referred to the Unborn or what I have called the "Cosmic Unconscious". "For the unborn is the fountainhead of all creative possibilities. 'The mature man' has to cleanse himself of this affective contamination and also to free himself of the intellectual conscious interference if he sincerely wishes to realize a life of freedom and spontaneity where such disturbing feelings as fear, anxiety, or insecurity have no room to assail him. When this liberation takes place, we have the 'trained' unconscious operating in the field of consciousness."[46]

In theological terms there are three bodies of Buddha : (1) *Dharmakaya* or Essence body, (2) the Body of bliss, the Heavenly manifestation, (3) Emanation or incarnation, the visible body on earth. It is like the Christian doctrine, of Father, Christ in Glory, and Christ.[47] *Dharmakaya* reveals itself in all forms of beings. In it all beings are one. From it arise all Buddha natures. Sometimes *Dharmakaya* is called *Adi-Buddha* or the Supreme Being. *Dharmakaya*, Suchness or *Sunya*, is the womb of those who attain the stage of being undetermined. It is the Supreme and All-Embracing ground of Buddhahood. It reveals itself in the Buddhas and their limitless compassion for man. It is Immanent in all beings and is Transcendent too. It is the love which flows to all beings and leads them to their salvation. It pervades everything, comprehends everything and moves everything. In it all beings are united. Realisation of it is the realisation of our unity with our fellow creatures. It is this doctrine of *Dharmakaya* and *Bodhichitta* which forms the basis of the ideal of *Bodhisattva*, of all Mahayana ethics and its interest in the world.[48]

Something like the doctrine of incarnation is also suggested; for the Eternal Buddha sends bodies to do his work in the world. In Mahayana writings Sakya Muni says, "I am the Father of the world, the Self-born, the Healer, the Protector of all creatures." The 'Body' of bliss is infinite and boundless. It is full of attributes and bliss.[49]

The culmination of Mahayana is the *Bodhisattva* doctrine. It epitomises its philosophy, theology, ethics and its new approach

to the world. *Bodhisattva*, *Bodhi* or *Bodhichitta* is the 'heart of enlightenment' and is the expression of *Dharmakaya* in human consciousness. It is present in all beings, but it is active only in Buddhas and *Bodhisattvas*. They transmit *Dharmakaya's* grace to man. It benefits us through its loving heart. It delivers us from the misery of birth and death. It evokes the spirit by which we rise and achieve Buddhahood.[50] In Mahayana the *Bodhisattva* stage precedes that of *Arhat*. The *Arhat* accepts *Nirvana*. But, the *Bodhisattva* refuses to accept release till all living beings are released. He would not forsake them. In a sense we are all potential *Bodhisattvas* and Buddhas. But the love of *Bodhi*-heart is not manifest in us. The *Bodhisattva* dedicates all past and future merits, lives and activity to save others in the world. Because of love, he cannot be idle. He, therefore, owns sorrow of all the world. Because of virtue he is generous. Once one becomes Buddha, he leaves others to work for themselves. Buddha, on death bed, said "Be ye lamps into yourselves."[51] But in Mahayana, Buddha also does not stop work. *Bodhisattvas*, emanations of the supreme Buddha, work for the world as Jesus did for the Father. *Bodhisattva* is not an *Arhat* for his own *Nirvana*, but works for the *Nirvana* of all beings out of compassion. Mahayana even calls the Hinayana ideal of *Nirvana* for one's own self as selfish and narrow.

Whereas in Hinayana, as in Sankhya and Jainism, each life is separate and must evolve its own *Nirvana*, in Mahayana vicarious atonement (as by Jesus) by the *Bodhisattva* is possible and is accepted. Thus, the interdependence and unity of all life is assumed. The merit of one could be devoted and transferred to all. Even there is a prayer that one's merit may be shared by all. It interprets *Karma* also in a vicarious sense. The whole world is one and shares common *Karma*. Each of us works for the good or ill of all. In fact, it does not lessen one's responsibility; it enhances it. The more responsible one is, the higher is his sense of duty and zeal in performing his work. Hinayana, like Jainism and Sankhya, is made for the individual line of *Karma*. Mahayana is for common *Karma*. In Mahayana we inherit ancestral *Karma* and give our *Karma* to all humanity.[52] Mountains and rivers are aggregates. Death and birth have no beginning; and the future has no end. All the present activities are the result of an aggregate and cumulative past. *Karma* is fatalistic about the past. It also makes the present. But, everyday we have the liberty of making the future *Karma*. What we come to be is owing to the direction of the will. If we are responsible for our present actions, we are always

responsible for our character on which future actions depend. One *Bodhisattva* vowed not to accept salvation until each dust particle got ṣalvation. *Bodhisattva* feels, "I have to do the task as others are not capable of doing it. So duty is cast on me; and I am not impotent, and others are weak and enslaved by passion. Why others do a lowly task while I stand by. It will be pride if I do not do it.[53] *Bodhisattva* is greedy for work. How can one who is happy in work, be idle and happy without work. In Hinayana three important things are Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. In Mahayana the emphasis is on the three items of Buddha, sons of Buddha (*Bodhisattvas*) and *Dharamkaya* or Heart of Buddha. He, in whose heart wisdom awakes, shirks not *Samasara* and rushes to save fellow creatures from drowning. He shirks not experience. It is from sin and compassion that the seeds of Buddhahood grow, not from inaction. Compassion and self-giving are the basic virtues of *Bodhisattva*. He surrenders all his merit for others, and accepts as his the sins of all his fellow beings. The sorrow and sins of the world are his. He spends his life in atoning for the sins of the world. His resolve is to save every being.[54]

The way to arouse *Bodhichitta* in us is through a moral life. Six perfect virtues, namely, charity, moral conduct, patience, strenuous effort, meditation, and wisdom are prescribed. Self love is the greatest sin since it isolates us from our fellow beings. But, it is the Eternal Buddha who alone can save us from our egoism. We should follow the example of Buddhas in order to alleviate the sufferings of others. In the ethical field, the doctrine of vicarious responsibility and liability is accepted. We suffer because we are all making mistakes. We share the effect of the good and the bad deeds of others.[55] But that does not lessen our responsibility for good deeds. The *Bodhisattva* uses all his energies, merit and power to help others in their salvation.

Amitabha is a Buddha who has vowed to save everyone. A mystical devotional system has arisen whereby the help of Amitabha is invoked for one's salvation. "Let them call my name ten times and they will be born in my paradise, unless they had committed any one of the five heinous sins, or let me not be a Buddha", is the vow of Amitabha.[56] The efficacy of death-bed repentance is admitted. Buddha after enlightenment, is supposed to be the Saviour, Will, Form or the Spirit of Thought. "Eternity is in love with the production of Time" and makes responses to life. 'He makes himself as we are so that we become as He is.'[57]

The goal of life is *Nirvana* which invclves the awakening of

the eternal Buddha nature in all men. It means the death of egoism, freedom from subjectivity, the realisation of one-ness with all beings, and love for all. This itself is the Heart of Buddha, the Ultimate Reality, the *Dharmakaya* or *Nirvana*. It is infinite wisdom, love and all things. In Mahayana, *Nirvana* and *Samsara* are not opposed. The Essence of *Samsara* and *Nirvana* is the same.[58] Even a person who has achieved *Nirvana* does not rest. He is out to help his fellow beings. This is just like the historical Buddha. He has the compassion and wisdom of *Dharmakaya*. In fact, a *Bodhisattva* is happy at his birth because it gives him further opportunity to help mankind. In a way, in Mahayana, the distinction between a *Bodhisattva* and Buddha has been done away with, since both help the suffering. In this context, *Nirvana* is redefined as a state in which one rejoices at making others happy. *Samsara* is a state where one is trying to make only oneself happy. Expression of universal love for fellow beings is *Nirvana*. It is an active love for man. In *Nirvana* we lose our separateness. A Buddha serves numerous creatures and men because he is in *Nirvana* in tune with the *Dharmakaya* or the Supreme Reality. He, in his activity, realises his unity with all men. Because of his unity with *Dharmakaya* he feels his unity with all men, since it permeates all beings.[59]

Next is the issue of classification of Mahayana as a mysticism. Both in theory and practice, Mahayana has completely reversed the position as it obtained in Hinayana. The doctrine of *Bodhisattva* has wholly revolutionised the stand of Mahayana and its approach to life. In Hinayana, *Nirvana* and *Samsara* are opposed. In Mahayana they are closely connected. *Samsara* is the activity of *Nirvana*. Truth will be found only in everyday existence.

Bodhisattva's approach to life is equally radical. He is happy to be born again and again, since it gives him opportunity to serve mankind. He has all compassion and love for his fellow beings.[60] Mahayana accepts the position of full responsibility and vicarious liability in the moral field. Accordingly, Mahayana is a mysticism of the prophetic class.

ZEN BUDDHISM

Zen means *Dhyana, Jnana* or meditation. It is virtually a modification of the Mahayana. Spontaneity of living and enlightenment are of its essence. Its fundamentals are the same as that of the other Buddhisms. It is based on the four noble truths and the eight-fold path laid by Buddha.

The world is a suffering, changing and impermanent. There is no subsisting self or soul. It is like an illusory circle made with a burning stick. Secondly, there should be no grasping, as there is nothing worth grasping. This principle, if logically carried to the extreme, would devalue all ethics. The way out of this vicious circle of frustrating, grasping and fleeting and changing life is into *Nirvana*. By this, despair changes into joy. It is free. As in the case of Yoga, it involves the cessation of all turnings of the mind. *Nirvana* is the unself-grasped state of the mind. It is not annihilation of the mind. But, it is something beyond it, undefiniable and free. Anything conceivable and definable is not *Nirvana*. The awakening is spontaneous when futility of all grasping or desires is realised. It transcends all dualities. The fourth truth is of the eight-fold path of Buddha. Even meditation should not be with an object in view. That by itself accentuates grasping and becomes a futile meditation. *Nirvana* is one point awareness without distinction of the knower, the knowing and the known. There is no suffering for none suffers. There is no seeking since nothing is there to seek for. Deeds are done, but no one does them.

The doctrine of *Bodhisattva* is accepted. The *Bodhisattva* has no ego, no being and no personality. He just goes on living as a very ordinary person. *Nirvana* is an uncontrived or unsought-for bliss of liberation and freedom. It is not void, nor non-void. All things are without any self. They are changing and only relative. Nothing is by itself. Hence there is no ideal of *Nirvana* as opposed to *Samsara*. As opposed to *Samsara*, *Nirvana* becomes an element of striving and, therefore, of *Samsara*. All things are non-dual as are *Samsara* and *Nirvana*. What appears *Samsara* is really *Nirvana*. What is the world of form is *Nirvana*. Form is empty and emptiness is form.[61]

Zen involves naturalness and no effort. Pursuit of goals leads to other goals. There has to be no effort, no way out and no willing. There is no trapper nor is there anyone trapped. Suddenly, the constraint on man breaks at the deepest level of consciousness. One lives spontaneously without trying to be spontaneous.[62] There is no self to bring it under control. Sunyata has a positive aspect. It is known not by its description but by its reality and living. It can be seen unscreened. 's not divided and distorted by concepts and thoughts. It is a concrete and actual world. Man is awakened to this non-conceptual but an existential reality and experience. Suchness is neither past, nor present, nor future. It simply 'is'. It is 'Now'.

All beings are endowed with the Buddha nature and can become Buddhas. But any attempt to become Buddha is false pride. All the same the repetition of Name Amitabha is effective. By *Prajna* (intuition) one sees the nature of reality. This in turn awakens compassion (*Karuna*) for all. *Prajna* is to see that all form is Void and *Karuna* is to see that Void is form.[63] In this sense it is not a Buddhism of world denial. One is free and without obstruction. One sees no obstruction between things and things. One sees them in their suchness. It is the doctrine of *Dharma Dhatu*. "We should not separate ourselves from the world, nor order it around.[64] The whole world is the body of Buddha. It is in harmony and is organised from within. It needs no interference from without. The classified world is not the real world.

From the Store-Consciousness arises spontaneously the formal world. Whatever is linked by cause and effect belongs to the world of *Maya* or relativity. This world of illusion comes out of the Void spontaneously and purposelessly. This activity is unmotivated. We divide it because our consciousness projects a classified and relative world. The Buddhist Yoga or *Dhyana* consists in reversing this process.. The discriminating senses and the process of categorisation have to be stopped, so that the world could be seen in its unclassified suchness. At this stage awakens compassion. The *Bodhisattva* becomes identified with this playful and purposeless character of the Void.[65]

In Zen this awakening is natural and sudden. It could happen any moment, even in the midst of everyday life. To seek it, is to lose it. The release may be immediate, natural and without effort. One enters it, without exterminating defilements and failings.[66] The Ultimate Reality has no qualities. It cannot be the object of knowledge. It is non-dual. Hence truth is known by direct insight or mystic intuition, and not by the mind. Though this undefinable spirit is beyond the world, it also lies ever within it. This is the paradox. It is like the transcendence and immanence of Reality. There is no incompatibility between Buddhahood and everyday life. This awakening coming spontaneously, is called *Satori*. It comes in a flash, suddenly, or at any time as the result of a blow from the Zen Master, or otherwise from a very normal event in life. This awakening takes one to the border line, where the finite and the infinite meet. It enables the soul to see both ways, the Reality and where the infinite flows into the finite. It opens the *Prajna* eye to see things as they are, in their suchness. This *Prajna* is a mystic experience. This experience has noetian, conative and

affective elements as well.[67] It arouses *Karuna*. With this experience starts the life of the Zen mystic.

It is said of a Zen Master (Bodhidharma) that for nine years he kept gazing at a wall. Once when the Emperor asked him what was the first principle of the religion he replied, "It is just empty. Nothing sacred." The Emperor asked him, "Who are you ?" "I do not know", he replied.[68]

Zen has been defined as, "outside teaching, apart from tradition, not founded on words, pointing directly, seeing in one's mind and attaining Buddhahood."[69] Perfect *Tao* (peace) involves no picking and choosing. The bringing of the mind under control, as practised in India, is contrary to Zen. Zen lets it go and lets it to be alone. *Satori* could occur without the direction of a master. In Zen the highest state of consciousness is empty of content, ideas and feelings. True mind is no mind. There is nothing to perfect or purify it. It is pure already. It is not the object of thought and action. The attempt to work on the mind is entering a vicious circle. All effort is grasping and defeats the purpose. It is self-righteous to be methodical. It is no use to sit and bind the body so as to concentrate and do meditation. The cultivation of concentration is wrong from the very start. One should neither avoid false thoughts nor seek true ones, as ignorance is Buddhahood. Tao is not knowing. Knowing is false understanding. Tao is like the empty sky. It is no use dragging it in the realm of the right and the wrong. By wanting to be in accord, one deviates from the truth. By seeking, one produces the contrary effect. It is like pressing a part of the water in a trough in order to bring it in level. It is already level. The pressing only disturbs its equilibrium and defeats the purpose.

The Zen masters may be incharge of temples or lead a layman's life. Their motto is "When hungry eat, when tired sleep".[70] One should not cling nor seek. The universal mind can be understood only spontaneously. It is no use searching what is not lost. One's natural and spontaneous functioning is Buddhahood. There is no place in Zen Buddhism for using effort. When circumstances come, one should not change them. One should not create *Karma* by seeking liberation. That way one is only making *Karma*. Zen is being natural without intending to be so and without any effort. One should grow up naturally and lose self-consciousness. The Zen is orderly, unhurried, energetic. humorous and clean. Seeking *Satori* thrusts it away. The Zen breaks from all conventions including the moral ones.[71]

In practice emphasis is laid on meditation and sitting for hours. The Zen disciples at the monastery sometimes meditate even from 3.30 a.m. to 10 p.m.[72] But by doing and practising *Samadhi* one cannot achieve *Samadhi*. By sitting one will not achieve Buddhahood. If one wants plain truth, one should not be concerned with right or wrong. Such concern is the sickness of mind. One has to cultivate bland indifference to things. When we recognize goodness as good, there is already evil. Good without evil is like up without down. Pursuing the good is like going to the right and the right in order to avoid the left. We are caught in a dualistic pattern and Zen is liberation from that pattern. It is absurd to say life can be improved by the selection of the good.[73] The sensation of comfort can be maintained only in discomfort. To eat is to survive so as to be hungry again. Good and evil are the two sides of the coin. As to the dualistic thought, the Zen view is fatalistic. In the Zen view, no one suffers. The dualism of the subject and the object is wrong. We suffer because we separate ourselves. The entire idea of the personal mind and experience happening to one, is an illusion. We raise symbols for different persons thereby creating conflicts for ourselves. Actually, we have no self other than the whole. We do not breathe. It breathes us. We create a false self and thereby separate and suffer. The idea of myself is just to discover the actual relation between the outside world and 'myself'. It is wrong to say that the same man becomes old or dies. The bird, the fish, the water and the sky all have a corporate life. All of them make each other. None are separate. The bird wanting to know the limits of the sky will never fly; nor the fish wanting to measure the extent of the ocean will ever swim.

The life of Zen begins with a disillusion about the pursuit of goals, which never exists. Seeking Buddha is losing Buddha. Our non-conceptual Self is Buddhahood and needs no improvement. In the course of time it may grow. One blames not the egg for not being a chicken. There is no need to have ideas of goal or concepts of teleology. To have ideas of Zen is to have stink of Zen. When questioned "What is Buddha" the answer was, "Three pounds of flax."[74] The more one tries to rationalise, categorise, define and conceptualise things, the more one gets away from the truth. The attempt to catch things is frustrating and makes for unhappiness. The marvel is the freedom of action. The world then ceases to be an obstacle against anyone. It is a discovery of freedom in ordinary tasks. When the sense of subjective isolation or I-ness

vanishes, the world is no longer felt to be a difficult or hostile object.

The focus of self or ego should go. Zen suggests spontaneous activity as a part of the whole. Spontaneous action is human, but not contrived action. On hearing news of a relation's death, the Zen master started weeping. On being questioned about his emotional outburst, he replied, "I weep because I want to weep. Don't be stupid."[75] There is a self contradiction in planned action or even in affected naturalness. Thinking carefully inhibits action and spontaneity. When one is sensitive one dithers, wobbles and goes in *Samsara.* Zen is for action and not reflection, which destroys spontaneity and naturalness and causes strain. Zen is liberation from the dualism of thought and action. One should think and act spontaneously without checks and without 'I' consciousness. There should be no direction from without. Leap into action without thought of consequences.[76] There need be no shuddering paralysis. Thinking only brings *Samsara.* The mind and the object of its search are one.

Social conduct involves 'I' as a means of self-control. Hence arises ego or 'I'. Thus the centre of gravity shifts from the original Mind to the ego. The 'I' is incapable of action that is sincere, unaffected or spontaneous. Spontaneity ends duality between the known and the knower, the subject and the object, and the mind and the world. Mind speaks when the 'I' is silent. In not feeling it, we get it. There is no birth or death and no supreme knowledge. To enter Suchness is to enter life without any aim. For Zen this life is the conclusion. There is no other conclusion to be derived from it. It is senseless to draw conclusions. "If you are a real man grab the food of a starving man", i.e., draw no ethical conclusions. Zen is beyond the ethical standpoint. We cannot live for a day without destroying other life. One has to go ahead purposelessly, without aim or motive.[77] One is competent to respond to all situations. One has not to deliberate and think for acting. Zen is not for killing the reflective thought. But it is for eliminating all obstacles against thinking and acting spontaneously so that the response is like that of a ball in a stream of water.

The Zen enters life whole-heartedly and freely, without an eye on oneself. One does not bother and confuse oneself by thinking of God. One should do without thought of Zen, Tao or Buddha. In Zen there is neither self, nor Buddha. There is no good to gain, no evil to avoid, no thought to be eradicated, no mind to be purified, no soul to be saved and no body to perish. In one

Satori the entire framework is shattered.[78]

There is no distinction between Zen awakening, meditation and action. All flow from the Whole. It suggests an aimless self-sufficient life of the eternal Now. One does not practice Zen to be a Buddha, but because one is already a Buddha. There is no idea to improve the world. The practices suggested are *Prajna*, wisdom and *Karuna*. Just as muddy water is better left alone, so leave the world in turmoil. This is the best. One must experience things without jumping to conclusions. All this is in contrast to the attitude in the West.

Zen is seeing the reality in Suchness and directly. One sees it while sitting and walking without any purpose. Even the purpose of getting rid of the purpose is wrong. One should follow the Buddhist way without thought of the morrow. Let life and death come as they may, take them without lament and naturally. Such life and death are the life of Buddha. In avoiding them one loses life and Buddha. When one sees things directly, the past and the future are nowhere to be found.

In *Rinzai* school, answers have to be found to questions and problems. Answers are discussed by personal intuition. Such problems are called *Koan* and those have to be solved by the disciple. They work for years. It is a method of training the Zen student. The object is not to develop the intellect of the student. In fact, the aim is to expose the intellect, exhaust it and eliminate it. The student is brought to the wit's end and knows that he does not know.[79] That is the object of *Koan*. The self-seeking self is defeated. When true knowledge comes, the self vanishes. There is no hard core of selfhood left to stand against the rest of the world. The ego is gone. The ultimate aim is to awaken mystic intuition and to arouse a *Satori*. It comes when one is exhausted and is not grasping anything. *Prajna* leads to *Karuna* (compassion). There is no true awakening unless it leads to a life of *Bodhisattva*. This means the manifestation of the Void for the benefit of all sentient beings. The *Koan* training comes to an end at the stage of naturalness. It is a freedom both in the absolute and the relative worlds. It is this freedom which supports the natural order. For a moral act is moral only if it is free, without compulsion of reason or necessity. To think is to grasp. The ego is the obstacle in the progress of Buddhahood. When all ideas of selfhood, moral values, disciplines are purged, there is no hearer left. Then you hear everything. Zen liberates one from time. It is a life of natural spontaneity in the Now.

Zen masters are very human. They fall sick, die and have little weaknesses of character. The difference between a Zen and an ordinary man is that the former is spontaneously human and the latter is trying to be an angel or a demon. One has to find Zen for oneself.

We have given a descriptive account of Zen. Two points still need to be considered. The first is a certain amount of ambiguity, almost bordering on incongruity, between the Zen theory and its practice. The second is a statement of Suzuki's views in this regard.

Zen Buddhism accepts the basic principles of Buddhism, including its *Anicca* and *Anatta* doctrines. "All composite things (*sankhara*) are impermanent. When a man by wisdom (*panna*) realizes (this), he heeds not (this world of) sorrow; this is the path to purity."[8] It is, thus conceded that all things are egoless and sorrowful. On this account Buddhism has been dubbed as nihilistic. But, it would be difficult to make such a drastic assertion against Zen, especially when here spontaneity of living is of the essence. In Zen, the link between *Samsara* and *Nirvana* is accepted. Here enlightenment is a unification. By it a fundamental basis of identification is reached.

All the same, a certain ambivalence is visible in the Zen approach towards the world, more especially towards the moral life. True, Zen does not discard life. But there is little doubt that its activities have remained mainly meditational and monastic. Probably, because of its stress on spontaneity and naturalness, the Zen disciple does not strive to accept moral responsibility in any field of life. Here his stand is quite in contrast with that of the Mahayanist, who rushes to grasp all opportunity of service of fellow beings. May be, this seeming disregard of moral responsibility in Zen follows from its pantheistic outlook. For moral life has never been a strong point of pantheistic systems. In this context, it would be unfair not to record the views of Suzuki who seeks to rebut any such inference.

Suzuki attempts to draw a parallel between the views of Zen mysticism and those of Eckhart, a Christian mystic. Suzuki is aware that even in his life time Eckhart was seriously accused of pantheism. And, yet, he quotes the following from Eckhart to establish a close similarity between the two systems. "But for me, to know God thus, with nothing between, I must be all but he, he all but me. '...I say, God must be very I, I very God, so consummately one that this he and this I are one "is", in this isness working one works eternally; but so long as this he and this I, to

wit, God and the soul, are not one single here, one single now, the I cannot work with nor be one with that he,"[81] "Whereby man may come most closely to God and wherein he may once more become like the original image as he was in God when there was yet no distinction between God and himself before God produced creatures."[82] "Neither the One, nor being, nor God, nor rest, nor blessedness, nor satisfaction is to be found where distinctions are. Be therefore, that One so that you may find God."[83] "The father ceaselessly begets his Son and, what is more, he begets me not only as his Son but as himself and himself as myself, begetting me in his own nature, his own being. At that inmost Source I spring from the Holy Spirit and there is one life, one being, one action."[84] "It is so with God. It is his pleasure and rapture to discover identity, because he can always put his whole nature into it—for he is this identity itself." "My eye and God's eye are one and the same—one in seeing, one in knowing and one in loving."[85]

Suzuki does not rest at that. Dean Inge had quoted a passage from Eckhart indicating the separateness of the soul from God. Inge had done so in order to show Eckhart's theism, i.e., that God and the soul are different. But, Suzuki re-interprets the same so as to show not only Eckhart's pantheism, but also to assert that Eckhart had a Zen *Satori* before he wrote the passage. The passage and the relevant comments from Suzuki are : "Although it (soul) sinks in the eternity of the divine essence, yet it can never reach the ground. Therefore, God has left a little point wherein the soul turns back upon itself and finds itself and knows itself to be a creature."[86] Strangely enough, Suzuki interprets this passage, which would otherwise suggest the impassableness of the soul into God, as exactly providing the opposite i.e., the soul's entry into God. The little point, Suzuki feels, is not a gap, but it is a sort of window or an axis to enable the soul to have unity or identity with God. He quotes Eckhart profusely to establish the Zen idea that the finite is infinite and the infinite is finite and the two meet and participate in each other. To distinguish between the two is the relative way of thinking. This, he feels, is a compulsion of all the relative thought process; disintegration is possible because of integration and *vice versa*. At the little point he says, the soul sees both ways. Suzuki goes still further. In order to prove his Zen view of identity between the Real and the Relative, he dogmatically calls this little point as the Zen experience of *Satori*. Suzuki writes : "A little point" left by God corresponds to what zen Buddhists would call *Satori*. When he strikes this point we have a *Satori*. To have a *Satori* means

to be standing at Eckhart's "point" where we can look in two directions : God-way and creature-way. Expressed in another form, the finite is infinite and the infinite is finite. This 'little point' is full of significance and I am sure Eckhart had a *Satori*."[87] In fact, Suzuki's entire attempt is to show that the theistic view of duality of Creator and creature is a failing of the relative thought, and that, when a great mystic like Eckhart translates his mystic experiences into language, he portrays concepts that resemble closely those of Zen. Suzuki also writes : "God, as long as he remains in himself, with himself, and for himself, is absolute subjectivity, *Sunyata* itself. As soon as he begins to move, however, he is creator, and the world with its infinitely varying situations or conditons evolves. The original God or the Godhead has not been left behind in his solitariness, he is in the manyness of things. It is human reasoning which is time that so often causes us to forget him and place him outside our world of time and space and causality."[88]

Be that as it may, but the Zen view of Self-identity and Relativity being an aspect of Reality cannot escape the charge of pantheism. These basic divergences of views between Zen and Theism become very apparent when we come to the field of life. Zen does not accept the doctrines of a God of Personality and Grace, nor the value of prayer. But these are of fundamental significance in all theistic systems. Suzuki concedes that Nagarjuna's following doctrine of "Eight No's", is rather negativistic. "There is no birth, Nor is there death; There is no beginning, Nor is there any ending; Nothing is identical with itself, Nor is there any diversification; Nothing comes into existence, Nor does anything go out of existence."[89] These lines are so akin to those of the monistic *Sankara*, which we have quoted elsewhere in the book. In fact, some believe Nagarjuna to be the precursor of *Sankara's* illusion theory. True, Suzuki in his interpretations of Zen has tried to give a positive content to Suchness. In reference to the relative world, he talks of the attributes and dynamism of Suchness. He refers to it as a Zero with infinite possibilities.

In practice, it appears difficult for Zen to shed completely the negativism of the '*Anatta*' doctrine and the world being nothing but a suffering. For Zen moral life is a suffering and a grasping, a snare to be avoided; all moral effort, striving and purpose in life are without any significance. The awakened man in Zen is described as "an effortless, purposeless, useless man."[90] Let us here quote Buddha's words at the time of his enlightenment. "And wearisome is birth again and again. But now, maker of the

tabernacle, thou hast been seen; Thou shalt not rear this tabernacle again. All thy rafters are broken. Thy ridge-pole is shattered; the mind approaching the Eternal, has attained to the extinction of all desires."[91] Here Buddha clearly condemns the tabernacle. For him birth is wearisome. He has broken the rafters and the ridge-pole once for all, never to return to the tabernacle of birth again. Again, in reference to his experience of enlightenment, Buddha says, "I have conquered and I know all, I am enlightened, quite by myself and have none as teacher. There is no one that is the same as I in the whole world where there are many deities. I am the one who is really worth, I am the most supreme teacher. I am the only one who is fully enlightened. I am tranquillized. I am now in *Nirvana*."[92] We do not in the least suggest that it is an egoist utterance. But it is nothing like the last prayer of Jesus that "Thy Will be done and not mine." Nor is this anything like the words of Guru Nanak, "I am the smallest of the small." Buddha's declaration, we feel, is more akin to "I am Brahman" than to a theistic mystic's prayer to an Attributive God.

The same contrast in approach to life is visible in a theistic mystic's attitude of reverence to his teacher in Christianity, Islam and Sikhism compared to a Zen disciples relation with the Zen Master. The Zen may, after his enlightenment, even go to the extent of slapping his teacher. This is what Suzuki writes, "Especially when the Master stands rigidly and irrevocably against the pupil's intellectual approach, the pupil, failing to find what to make of the situation, feels as if he were utterly depending on the Master's helping hand to pick him up. In Zen this kind of relationship between Master and pupil is rejected as not conducive to the enlightenment experience on the part of the pupil. For it is the *Koan Mu*, symbolizing the ultimate reality itself, and not the Master, that will rise out of the pupil's unconscious. It is the *Koan Mu* that makes Master knock down pupil, who, when awakened, in turn slaps Master's face. There is no Self in its limited finite phase in this wrestlers-like encounter. It is most important that this be unmistakably understood in the study of Zen."[93]

According to Suzuki, *Prajna* awakens *Karuna* or compassion which he likens to love in the case of the theists. This *Karuna* embraces all sentient beings. But the ambivalence remains. The Absolute ego creates the Relative ego in order to see itself reflected in it. Enlightenment is being the Absolute ego as reflected in the Relative ego and working through it. Relativity, though it is an aspect of Reality, is not Reality. Evidently, in view of the doctrines

of *Anicca* and *Anatta*, it is given no status of its own. The temporal life, as such, is not given any validity or meaning. Buddha never reverted to life in his kingdom. He organised only the *Sangha*. In Zen too the border limits of the monk's life remain confined to the monastery. True, since the tenth century A.D., the Chinese introduced the item of work in the Zen disciple's life.[94] Earlier the disciple's monastic life consisted mainly of learning and meditation. Even begging was known among followers of Zen. Bankei, a great Zen Master, was himself a beggar before he was persuaded to teach a feudal lord.[95] To his last days, Hyakujo, who insisted on the necessity of work, himself laboured only within the precinct of a monastery.[96] By and large the monastic life has remained the limits within which the Zen masters and their disciples have worked. The cardinal virtues practised by the Zen man and recommended for the disciple are charity, the precepts prescribed by Buddha for the order of the *Sangha* (Monastic-order), patience, energy, meditation and wisdom.[97] But, as mentioned already, these are disciplines meant for the maintenance of the *Sangha* as also for the awakened Zen man, whose life too remains confined to the monastery.

Spontaneity of living is the Zen man's goal in life. The object is to eliminate the ego-consciousness and let the Infinite consciousness work as it may. There is no attempt at organisation, much less is there any entry in the general field of life. There is nothing of Christ's spirit of "love thy neighbour as yourself," or Guru Tegh Bahadur's going to Delhi to save *Dharma* or the freedom of man. Zen, as Suzuki says, is to permit everyday mind to work itself. It is the spontaneous life of the everyday mind. As pointed out by the Zen Master, it is the same as the screeching of the squirrel. It is, "eat when hungry, sleep when tired."[98] There is no brotherly love of one's neighbour. For such love is an activity of the conscious or relative ego, a grasping in life. By this, moral life as such, stands devalued. The important thing is the nature and content of this spontaneous life. It is the actual expression of the everyday mind of 'eat-when-hungry, sleep-when-tired' outlook which is relevant. It is also called living a *Sono-Mama* life.[99] In it the everyday life asserts itself in all its fullness. After twenty years of hard study, Chokei lifted the curtain and saw the outside world. In a flash he understood the real meaning of Zen and spoke : "How mistaken I was — How mistaken I was ! Raise the screen and see the world ! If anybody asks me what philosophy I understand, I 'll straight-way give him a blow across his mouth with my *Hossu*."[100]

Suzuki himself writes that the Zen way 'looks so remote and

aloof from everyday life.'[101] He concedes that ordinarily the Zen Buddhists are neglectful in bringing out the *Karuna* aspect of the experience of the Zen mystic. He tries to explain it : "This is due to their being too anxious and therefore, too much in a hurry to destroy all the obstacles lying on the way to enlightenment, for they know that when this is accomplished what is to come therefrom is left to itself as it knows full well how to take care of it. When the devastating fire is extinguished the forest will not wait for any external help but will resume its biological functions by itself. When a man is shot by a poisonous arrow, the first thing to do is to remove it before it is embedded too deeply into the flesh. When this is done the body will heal the wound by its own power of vitality. So with human passions, the first work is to destroy their root of ignorance and egoism. When this is thoroughly accomplished, the Buddha-nature which consists in *Prajna* and *Karuna* will start its native operation."[102]

The question is not of theory, but of facts and practices. Does *Karuna* or love come out the way it came out in the case of Christ or other theistic mystics ? As the Zen tradition and institutions go this love does not normally cross the borders of the monasteries.

As against this *Karuna*, there is also the emphasis that Zen is nothing beyond living spontaneously in the 'Now'. There is only now. Nothing comes to be and nothing goes. There is no birth nor death. The moment is eternal, delightful and limitless. When a squirrel screeched, the Zen Master spoke, "It is just this, and nothing else."[103]

In this background the classification of Zen presents some difficulty. At one end the utterances of Zen masters like, "A Golden-haired lion." "The hedge at the bottom of the garden," would suggest Nature mysticism.[104] Zaehner calls one school of Zen Buddhism with a passive personality of "allowing things to happen to one" as belonging to the class of Isolation mysticism.[105] It is evident that Zen Buddhism, by its very nature, has no social concern. True, the Zen mystic does not live as a dead person, but he is not consciously or socially active either. Therefore, from whatever angle one may look at it, Zen Buddhism is a mysticism that is semi-active.

9

Christianity and Christian Mystics[1]

Mysticism of Christ

The very foundation of Christ's religion is mystical, for he says "I am in the Father and the Father in me. The words that I say to you I do not speak of myself, but the Father who dwells in me does His works."[2] The entire life and utterances of Christ are of a prophetic mystic. He had a message to give and a role to perform. He advised, "He who receives you, receives me and he who receives me receives Him who sent me."[3] Love was the very basis of his whole system of ethics and morality.

Throughout the utterances of Christ the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man remained the centre of his preachings. For him the world was real and all his life he strove for the uplift of man, especially the downtrodden and the morally poor. He condemned the amassing of wealth as the biggest block in the way of spiritual life, the kingdom of heaven. He spoke, "Love each other as much as I love you." Be ye "perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect."[4] Ultimately, he shed his blood and suffered crucification for the redemption of man. Love was the medium of his expression and operation. For Christ, God, in whose image man has to build himself with love as His son, is the fundamental basis of his religion. The Father, the Son and the Holy ghost (Love) are the Trinity. For man, too, the medium of expression and perfection is love, which forms the basis of all his moral and spiritual life. It is important that Christ never envisaged merger or identity with God even in the final state. After his resurrection, he ascends to heaven and "sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father, Almighty." The Father and the Son are always two, not one. But, that does not mean the son had a different will. Christ's last prayer to God to save him from the pain of the cross is the most sublime and clear enunciation of his mission. For he prays simultaneously that it is God's Will that should be done and not his. Christ's mysticism

is clearly theistic. Man's object is to perfect himself with love and be the son. The goal is not merger.

It would, it seems to us, be erroneous to infer that Christ bifurcated the spiritual from the temporal, or that he advised the avoidance of a political life. In fact, his own crucification was at the hands of the political administration of the day with whom he had come into conflict because of his work and functioning. It would be naive to suggest either that he did not realise that his preachings would bring him into clash with the political authority, or that, if he had known it, he would have avoided it by taking a different course of action.

In the theism of Jesus the World is real. To save man was the object of his mission, in pursuit of which he never shirked the highest sacrifice. It was a lead to show man the way and to lay a firm moral basis for human conduct on which the structure of society has to be constructed. In the above context, the answers to the issues raised by us earlier are clear. Christ suffered crucification not for his own salvation but for that of all men. Jesus prays that all those who follow him may share his union with God : "Even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us." "That they also may be with me where I am." "That they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and Thou in me, that they may become perfectly one."[5] In the light of the classification we have discussed earlier, Jesus's is a clear instance of prophetic mysticism.

Christian Mysticism

Whether Dionysius was a real or a fake personality or a neo-platonist, his writings have without doubt reflected the views of the mystics of his period. God is for him beyond knowledge and Transcendent. As the Universal Cause, God has all the Attributes, and yet He is beyond them and no negation or affirmation applies to Him. But, Dionysius's approach is other-worldly. He wants us to give up all activities of the intellect and senses in order to have union with Him. God is both Transcendent and Immanent. In mystical union the soul is absorbed or merged in Him, unconscious of itself. This union or deification is the goal of man. One reaches it in mystical ecstasy. In order to achieve it as a permanent condition, one has to practise self-renunciation and give up all attachment to the things of time and space. This mysticism is undoubtedly of the variety which Bergson describes as a half-way mysticism. It has no social content, the object being ecstatic union

or merger. True, the giving up of self-love is recommended, but so is renunciation of all things. It would, therefore, be obvious that this Christian mysticism, typical of the Eastern Church, is more akin to Neo-Platonism than to the mysticism of Christ. The goal is deification, divination, or being filled with the Divine Light. The methods used for this purpose are, silent prayers, concentration, breath-control and the like, and an ascetic withdrawal from the world. Ultimately, one has, by His Grace, the experience of the mind being merged in God as one spirit. For such mystics the unitive life is a life of asceticism and renunciation, though also of prayer, piety and love. They have charity for all created beings, man and beast, and pray for them. But it is not a life of active participation in the social field.

It is important to note that in all mysticism, which are not active or prophetic, the description of the unitive life is in terms which indicate unity, oneness, identity, merger or absorption. Such mysticism generally involves a life of permanent withdrawal, renunciation and asceticism. As against it, all activity-mysticisms distinctly disavow and disregard the goal of merger, absorption and asceticism. There is unity of spirit between the Father and the son, but the two are separate; the self-will is eliminated but God's will is owned as the light and guide. Rather, the ideal of merger or identity is specifically repudiated, since the mystic has to do his role and carry out the Will of God in life. The Quietist mystics, because of their description of the unitive experience as one of identity and absorption, are often dubbed as pantheists, more especially because they have no social concern, or an active life of love and service.

As against the above experience, Augustine speaks not of union but of vision, contact or penetration of the soul by God. There is little doubt that Christian mysticism upto the early middle ages had a Neo-Platonic outlook. Even for St. Bernard, the final mystic experience is of ecstacy in which the soul loses itself and becomes divine, deified and one with God. The final and complete entry of the soul in God comes only in the life to come. In this life such experiences are only sudden and momentary. By the very nature of this momentary experience, it is implied that there is no identification with God, though in love they become one in spirit.

As to the method of ascent to God, as explained by the mystic author of 'Cloud of Unknowing.' it is other-worldly. One has first to forget about the created things and think of the Attributes of God. Thus, dissociation from the things of the world is a necessary

counterpart of the contemplative life. Angela Foligno mentions that meditation and prayer are the essential means for the mystic experience, which for her involved gracious words from God and a clear vision of Him who spoke to her.

Eckhart, a renowned mystic, is the chief philosopher-exponent of Christian mysticism. He has been so profuse in his description and so garrulous in his utterances that it has led some critics to assert that the mystic experience is neither ineffable, nor non-sensory, nor non-rational, since mystics the world over have expressed and justified their experiences in rational terms. Eckhart has, indeed, said so much and so many things on the various aspects of his mystic experiences that, as in the case of the *Upanisads*, different persons have derived support from his utterances to propound variant views. Though a lofty figure in Christian mysticism, he was and continues to be quite a controversial person in the orthodox Christian world, especially because his utterances would lead to a pantheistic world-view. And yet, no mystic has asserted his views with greater emphasis than Eckhart. At one end he describes God as wholly different from our conceptions of Him and completely ineffable. God is neither this nor that, and transcends all descriptions. All created things are a mere nothing, since their existence depends on His presence in them. This description of nothingness of created things, and his saying that "God is neither good, nor better, nor best," invited the condemnation of the Pope. Eckhart says that in the essence of His Being, God is beyond all qualities. 'Being and goodness are garments or veils under which He is hidden."[6] Though He 'is', the word 'being' does not fully describe Him. At the other end, he talks almost of identity with God and it is only in mystical vision that God is contemplated without these veils. In Eckhart's conception, God and Godhead are two; and one is as different from the other as heaven from earth. For him, Godhead, God and soul are three different entities, though he does not always maintain the distinction between God and Godhead in his sermons. God for him is the Creator. Godhead for him is more like the *Nirgun*, *Nirankar* or Brahman, and God like the Immanent God. Since God is the Creator and the Active Power, like Sankara, his ideal is the experience of the Godhead or Brahman and not of God. The intellect or intuition, he says, is as little satisfied with God as with a stone or a tree. The soul ultimately goes to the Ground out of which spring all goodness and truth. And this union with the Divine Reality is the highest goal. No man can describe the

Godhead except that he can be ravished by the Light of Him, for man in his deepest being is one with God. It is possible to have the experience of the Godhead and thus raise oneself above time and space. The goal of man, therefore, is to become what he eternally is. Of course, the self or 'I' must be given up. One should be detached from the things of time and dwell in the eternity to which one belongs. Though Eckhart does suggest detachment from the world, his is a way of humility, love and self-surrender. He says that he receives God into him. He enters him and he is transformed into God to know Him as He is. Again, he speaks : "The eye with which I see God is the eye with which God sees me." "There is something in the soul that is so akin to God that it is one with Him."[7] It is descriptions such as these and many others which brought the charge of pantheism against him. But later he modified his stand by saying that during all his oneness with God 'a little point' of the soul was left.[8] His critics argue that, pursuant to the condemnations by the Church, such subsequent descriptions are a modification of the stand he took earlier, and actually his earlier descriptions only lead to the conclusion of identity of man with God. But, be it said in his defence that it was the living Eckhart who was always describing his experiences of oneness or identity with God. And, whatever be the nature of that experience and whatever be the words used to describe it, it is evident it could not mean a final merger or absorption, for Eckhart always conceded his separate identity which was out to preach, describe and sermonise. As in the case of Nicholas, all he meant was that God is so Infinite or Immanent everywhere that nothing could exist outside Him. But that does not imply identity. And, it is this Immanence of God which is described as the indwelling God in man by all mystics, Christians and others. Even on this issue Eckhart's assertion that there is something in the soul that is uncreated and uncreatable, suffered the severe chastisement of the Church. Julian, the English mystic, also indicates that the highest part of the soul is eternally united with God; and with His grace we could be one with the High Self above.

Let us see the utterances of other mystics on this issue. Blois says that God never departs from the centre of the soul.[9] Julian implies that the soul in its essence is uncreated.[10] St. Teresa asserts that God dwells in every soul, even of the greatest sinner.[11] True, most of these utterances, in a way, reflect the Neo-Platonic idea that man in essence belongs to the Eternal Order, the Ideal, the archetype of everything. It is the same as the Platonic idea in God's

Being. So, they have an existence, according to Suso, identical with God's Life and God's Essence.[12] Ruysbroeck says, "through the eternal Birth all creatures have come forth in eternity, before they were created in time. So God has seen and known them in Himself." Many of these are Platonic ideas. Man is eternally united with God in his deepest being. It is this "union between God and our spirit in the nakedness of our nature" which is the first cause of all holiness and blessedness."[13] It is necessary here to point out that, apart from the Platonic ideas in some of these utterances, these descriptions of the presence of God in man or his soul could only mean the immanence of God in everything. For, it cannot be imagined that apart from the Immanent God, which is everywhere, there is a separate part of God or an Eternal Entity in each soul.

Actually, there is no difficulty in uderstanding the description of God in man given by the various Christian mystics. But, it is the ideal or the logic that follows from the above description which is misleading, or atleast confusing. The Neo-Platonic tradition lays down that the goal of man is to revert to the original archetypal state, and thereby to lose the individual identity. That is why in all these cases the ideal life is other-worldly and that of reversion to God. The goal is not to carry out His will. True, in the tradition of Christ, Christian mystics were not wholly other-worldly. Some of them did take part in some charitable or service activity. But, by and large, there was nothing of the active execution of God's Will as was done by Christ. Thus, in the Neo-Platonic tradition the ideal of life was to revert to the original eternal life in God and not to carry out His Will. Nor was there any active confrontation with evil as was done by Christ or other Prophetic mystics. With these Christian mystics, probably because of the Christian background, the ideal was not of complete isolation, as in the case of Vedantists and Hinayanists. Theirs was a quietest ideal of enjoyment of the Beatific Vision, or of union with God by deification, divination or ecstacy. And this, despite the ideal laid down in *Theologia Germanica* that the deified man has to lead the life of Christ as he did while he was a man, and that he should love all men even if they did him utmost harm.

In practice, the life of these Christian mystics remained mostly confined to missionary activities or monastic activities. On moral issues, it rarely brought them in conflict with the erring social or political authorities of the day. Nor did they ever attempt to tackle the socio-political problems of their times. In fact, detachment from self was sometimes taken to mean a complete renunciation of

human ties and indifference to human affairs in order to be absorbed in the love of God. Unlike Jesus, the love of God was normally not transformed into an active love of man or his service. It is significant to note Eckhart's utterance that grace draws man away from the temporal things and purifies him from all the transient things.[14] Though world-flight was not insisted upon, the emphasis was on the inner solitude and being always filled with God. In short, a life of active service of man was neither suggested nor followed.

Leuba and Underhill state that quite tortuous and ascetic methods were followed and recommended for the achievement of the mystic union. Normally celibacy was observed. The final experience is ecstatic or a vision of light or a feeling of being filled with God, His Light or Love. At the third stage, the soul of man is ravished by the Divine Light and it completely forgets itself. Except in the case of spiritual marriage, which in rare cases becomes a permanent state, the final experience is temporary. Ruysbroeck says : "Whenever we feel this union, we are one being and one life and one blessedness with God."[15] Eckhart clearly talks of identification with the Divine as the birth of the Son (or Word) in man. God emanates into man, the soul ascends into God, and there is identity between the soul and the Son. He even says, "When the soul is free from time and place, the Father sends His Son into the soul." "When the Father begets His Son in me, I am the same Son, and not another." "He makes me His only-begotten Son without any difference." "I am transformed into Him in such a way that He makes me one with His being, and not just similar to it. By the living God, it is true that there is no difference."[16] "Similar pantheistic affirmations of oneness are made by St. John of Cross , John of Angels, Estella and others. Leon even says that "In very truth the soul not only has God dwelling in it, but is indeed God."[17]

In a number of cases this experience is followed by a period of depression and wretchedness, or what is called the Dark Night of the soul. For some mystics deification or spiritual marriage is not a temporary experience. It turns into a permanent union with the Divine of which the mystic is conscious. Such was the case of St. Catherine of Genoa, who started the first hospital there and served the sick. In this state the mystic rightly feels that he or she is the instrument of God. But Mme Guyon, who claimed such deification, was deemed to be quietist during that period. It is, however, significant to note that in all cases of spiritual marriage

with a permanent union, the mystic is aware of his or her separate identity, though he or she is filled with God. The experience is not temporary or ecstatic in which self-consciousness is almost lost. It is for such reasons that Leuba calls the ecstatic experiences, especially in the case of Mme Guyon, St. Teresa, Catherine of Genoa, as psychopathic states due to suppressions and the like. It is, Leuba feels, because of their human frustrations, that they resorted to a compensatory life of union or marriage with God. To us it appears a very unwarranted and unfair inference. If St. Catherine's service of the sick is psychopathic, the only normal behaviour would be of self-interest and self-centredness. Such a rationale is nothing short of a perversion.

John Tauler, Ruysbroeck and the author of *Theolgia Germanica,* mention the deified mystic as having lost self will and as doing only the Will of God. This last mentioned author finds the purpose of the universe in the expression of the Divine Will through created beings. It is God that does things through man. Such a man is emptied of his own self. He is imbued with divine love and light and is filled with God alone. Mystics like Mme Guyon and St. Teresa who claimed spiritual marriage, were quietists and suggested a life of prayer, meditation and solitariness in order to seek the mystic life and the 'birth of Son'. Many such mystics, whether dubbed as quietist or not, led a life of quiet aloofness from the main stream of life.

By and large, Christian mysticism, as in the case of St. Paul and St. John, involved vision, ecstacy or temporary experience of deification, light or bliss. The experience was described as ineffable.

It has been felt that the mystic prayer need not be rational. A prayer was not considered to be perfect if the monk understood the prayer. There is little doubt that the practices of the Fathers of the Desert were extremely ascetic, ritualistic and other-worldly. St. Gregory suggests that, as a vocation, the contemplative life is superior to the active life in order to achieve the mystic goal. St. Catherine of Genoa was so absorbed with pure love that she would not intercede even for her nearest disciples or relatives, nor would she suffer distraction for them. The appearance of ecstasy is the third stage of mystic prayer or achievement. Similarly, the Beatific vision of God is the third or final stage of mystic height. St. Teresa mentions four stages of mystic progress : (1) the Prayer of quiet, (2) the Prayer of full union, (3) Ecstasy, (4) Transforming union, corresponding to deifying union, spiritual marriage or birth of son.

The last is a permanent state. For Eckhart, it is a state of Identification with God.[18] Both for Eckhart and Dionysius, God can best be described in negative terms. Generally, negativeness of the description of God, as in the cases of Vedantism and Buddhism, ends in Isolation mysticism. As against it, the Attributive description of God so often leads to activity and love.

Asceticism, meditation and traditional prayers have been used significantly for gaining the mystical experience. The preparatory stages are : (1) the disciplining of mind, or the Purgative way, (2) the disciplining of emotions, or the Illuminative way, and (3) the disciplining of direction or will, or the Unitive way. First comes the stage of Ecstasy and after it the spiritual union or Marriage. In the Eastern Christian mysticism the tradition is very ascetic. In fact, in all the systems of Eastern, Western and Orthodox Christian mysticism, ascetic methods of training are employed in order to have mystic experience, e.g., the use of icons, sacred pictures, the reciting of Jesus prayers and the repeating of prayers or a Name while inhaling and exhaling. The acceptance of a director, monk or guru, is also common in the mystical training.

With the Protestant mystics the emphasis comes to be more on doing the Will of God, though other things continued as such. Boehme is the typical example of the Protestant mysticism. Like Eckhart's, Boehme's utterances on the theological issues are in some respects revolutionary. In his first great mystic experience, he describes in his *Aurora* that he had the visitation of a Loving Light : "In this Light my spirit suddenly saw through all, and in all created things, even in herbs and grass, I knew God who He is, how He is, and what His Will is." "In one quarter of an hour....I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at a University." "I saw and knew the Being of beings, the Byss and Abyss, the eternal generation of the Trinity, the origin and descent of this world, and of all creatures through divine Wisdom." Boehime's teaching is important because he is one of the few Christian mystics who talks of knowing as to what God's Will is. He, like Eckhart, talks of *Ungrund* (Godhead of Eckhart) in negative terms, the Abyss, the Stillness, the Mystery, the Absolute, the source without Light or Darkness, Good or Evil. He also talks of God as a Personality. In the Being of Love or God, there is an eternal generative process or becoming where God as Personality comes out of *Ungrund*. God is not Becoming, but eternally He makes Himself what He is, eternally. He assumes His nature of goodness and love.[19] This, in a way, describes His Ever-

Creativeness. The entire manifestation is a process or play of opposites. Boehme follows the Platonic tradition. For him, as against the becoming universe of time and space, in the Ideal Universe or Eternal Nature, or the Uncreated Heaven, are things in their Perfection or Ideal state. This Eternal Nature is different from God but is inseparable from it. In His Essence man lives in this Ideal Universe in union with God. The becoming world is not a creation out of nothing but an outpouring or outbirth of the Ideal Universe. If it were a universe out of nothing how could, he feels, God reveal Himself to us or the world. He does mention also of creation by God. But, for him creation is an emanation and a manifestation. For, like the apple from the tree, the world grows from the power of God. Like Indians, Boehme uses the word 'play' or 'sport' for His creation. For him the world is in one harmony, and not discordant. The goal for him is to unite with God who is in us. The true man is hidden inside the fallen man. He is in heaven like God and the Heart of God is born inside the hidden holy self of man. 'The Son of God,' he says, "The eternal word of the Father, must become man, and be born in you, if you will know God." Christ "lives in us and unites us with himself." "We die" to the lower self "rise with him into union with God."[20] Suso is another mystic who refers to the Will of God. He gave up a life of solitude and took to outdoor work in pursuance of an inner call. His work among the people led to slanderous charges against him. That he believed was a life of trial and testing to which he was subjected by God.[20] Boehme also rejects the monastic life. He recommends quiet introversion so that God comes inside us. Self-will should go so that God's will works in us. Love is as divining power. But, generally his working remained comparatively semi-active and he did not enter the stream of socio-political life. According to him, all duality or polarity is grounded in God, and this polarity is essential for His manifestation. For his originality and clarity Boehme remains a land mark in Christian mysticism, especially for his emphasis on the Will aspect of God.

Franck says that God can be described only negatively He is Personal only in relation to us. He expresses Himself in the world, and in a way identifies Himself with it, and yet is eternally Transcendent. For Weigel God is the Essence beyond everything. Yet He incarnates in man and knows Himself through man. So He becomes a person, Will and Consciousness. All things are beams of light or rays of Reality or God. Together they form One harmonious unity. This is somewhat a pantheistic view. Law is

another mystic who like Boehme does not believe in a creation out of nothing since such a thing will have nothing of God. For him the world is a manifestation of all that was unmanifested in God, the Eternal Nature. All these are Platonic ideas about the Ideal World of ideas and Archetype. Law insists that God is the Eternal Will to Goodness and Love. He is Inconceivable. Attributes of God are only human ways of conceiving Him, but He is Ineffable. He is an Undivided Unity without the distinction of qualities. Ranters were called pantheistic or Neo-Platonic. Some of their utterances are similar to those of Sufis. "My seeking of Thee is no other but Thy seeking of Thyself."[21] Bauthumley, a Ranter, believes that all things were in God before they came out of Him in manifestation. In the end, everything will be rapt up in God again as everything has its being and subsistence in God. Salmon virtually accepts merger when he says that his soul split and emptied into the ocean of divine fulness. He was non-entitised into the Being of beings. This is merger in God, neo-platonic and pantheistic. Boehme and Law clearly deny creation *ex-nihilo,* and assert the world as a polarity of God, and yet they talk of His Will.

This problem of pantheism, theism, or panentheism is, indeed, intellectually insoluble. In Christianity the Church insists on a theistic world-view, but many mystics describe things in a manner that leads to a pantheistic conclusion. This is so, because mystics claim direct touch with Reality and give first priority to their personal experiences. In their symbolic description of their mystic experience, they assert a direct union with God or something like an identity with Him. But, their very description, subsequent to the actual experiences, implies their separateness even after their union or experience. Some of these descriptions, if logically construed, inevitably lead to a monistic or pantheistic interpretation. All these views only justify the pertinent observation of Al Ghazali that mystic utterances and descriptions should not be taken too literally, as they are likely to give wrong impressions.

In the Protestant mysticism, the Divine life and Light in man are assumed. "The kingdom of God is in you and he who searches for it outside himself will never find it." "God...is within us and is waiting for us to return to Him," says Denek.[22] Franck suggests that we must find God in us and ourselves in God. Similar is the view of Collegiants and Quakers who spoke of the inner Light. Barclay says, "Life is in all men as a seed which of its own nature draws, invites, and inclines to God."[23] The spark or light is both human and divine. The Cambridge Platonist, Rous, asserts, "the

soul has two eyes : one human reason, the other, far excelling that, a divine and spiritual Light. By it the soul doth see spiritual things as truly as the corporal eye doth corporal things." Since man is in depth one with God, our knowledge of God is God's knowledge of Himself in us. For Law the basis of all religion is the Light or Treasure in man, the birth of Christ in the soul. Protestant mystics recognize the revelation, or rather, in a way, the incarnation of God in Jesus. Denek says that God was so identified in Jesus in love that all the Will of God was the will of this person. Similarly, Sterry states that God and Christ are 'twined into one'. In Jesus God and man are one, one love, one life and one likeness. This is virtually the acceptance of the theory of incarnation.[24] Jesus's life, they assert, shows us the way to God.

Sin, for the Protestant mystics, is due to the fall of man. It is caused by a life of self-love (ego). For Fox there is evil in life, but there are also greater Love and Light above it. We have to eliminate this ego. The self has to be ended. Law believes that the self should be renounced so that God is all-in-all in us. The man who knows God, is all afire with love. The union with God manifests God's life in us. John Smith wrote that the good man is always 'drinking in fountain-goodness' of God, till he is filled with 'all the fulness of God'.[25] Mystics like Fox assert that it is possible in this life to attain perfection, but the obligations of moral life have not to be given up. He believes that Christ is beyond falling. The object is to make every man perfect in Christ. Similarly, Law believed in the final salvation of all men. Christian mystics recognize the Divine Light in all men, irrespective of creeds. The universal fellowship of all men is suggested. They claim that this Light is the final authority in religion.

Before we close the description of Christian mystics we should like to make a reference to the life of St. Joan of Arc. She was a mystic, who, in the tradition of Christ, took part in all aspects of life. St. Matthew's words "Give upto Caesar what is Caesar's" have, we believe, been often misunderstood. Those were spoken in a context where the object was only to dispel an un-warranted charge. But, these have been misconstrued to exclude all socio-political activity from the mystic life. Christ's crucification by the Roman authorities, though not of his own seeking, could certainly have been avoided, if he had felt that the life of God had nothing to do with the path of moral confrontation with the authorities. It has been a misunderstanding of the issue that later led to the virtual division of life into the field of the Church and that of the

kings. That day, Satan must have gloated over his first major victory over the forces of religion, thereby securing the socio-political spheres as his special and exclusive presence.

In this context it is easy to understand the ideals and activity of Christian mystics. The Eastern Christian mystics were more neo-Platonic than Christian in their expression and approach. Monastic life and celibacy were a common feature of the mystic life. They were theistic mystics all right, but for them the highest life was one of union with God and of bliss. That was the group who accepted and contributed to the ideas of Dionysius. With the later mystics, more especially the Protestant mystics, the ideas of service of man and carrying out of the Will of God became a significant part of their mystic life. But, side by side, the emphasis on other-worldliness continued. That was so even in the case of Boehme. Except for the tall figures of St. Joan of Arc and of Fox, few came out openly to work in the socio-political field. Otto, Underhill and Zaehner insist that activity has been the chief characteristic of Christian mystics. We have indicated broadly to what extent this statement is valid and the limitations thereof.

True, the statements of some of the Christian mystics, especially of the Eckhart group, have suggested what would seem to be a pantheistic system. Similarly, mystics with platonic ideas have led a life of union of bliss, or reversion in the essence of God from where man emerged. But in their expression of love and their general approach to life, even they were essentially theistic in outlook. In effect and practice, the other Christian mystics have been strictly theistic. They have demonstrated a clear inclination for the service of man and carrying out the Will of God. It will, therefore, not be appropriate to class Christian mystics as quietists. Much less can they be called isolationists. Individual mystics apart, Christian mystics, generally speaking, have belonged to the theistic class who have, to an extent, discharged their social obligations and responsibilities. But, except in a few cases, direct participation in the stream of socio-political life was not done by them. May be, the attractions and the bliss of the union are so absorbing that, despite the ideal laid down and the lead given by Christ for an active life of love and service of man, Christian mystics, by and large, have remained captivated and content with the raptures and the ecstasies of the spiritual experiences, instead of returning to a life of active participation in the world. Theirs is, thus, a mysticism of the semi-active class.

10

Islam and Sufism

Mysticism of Mohammad

Before the prophet no religion had parhaps, been so emphatically theistic as Islam. In the *Quran*, "Allah is One, all things depend on Him; He begetteth not, and He is not begotten; and there in none like unto Him."[1] There is a clear-cut difference between man and God who is Transcendent. In order to stress this duality between man and God even His immanent aspect, though clearly visible in the *Quran*, is indicated in a low key. Actually, it is the claim of the *Sufis* to have a relation with God that became the chief ground for their persecution by the Orthodox Muslim Church who considered this stand as heretical. And yet, there are clear references in the *Quran* indicating God's immanence. "We created man and We know what his soul whispereth to him, and We are closer to him than his neck-vein." "The East and West is God's : therefore, whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God." "God is the light of Heavens and of the earth." "God knows all that is in the Heaven and all that is in the Earth. Three persons speak not privately together but he is their fourth; nor five but He is their sixth; nor fewer nor more; but wherever they be, He is with them." And again, "Ye shall not be employed in affairs, nor shall ye read a text out of *the Quran*, nor shall ye work any work, but We will witness over you when you are engaged therein; and the weight of an atom on Earth or in Heaven escapeth not thy Lord."[2] God in the *Quran* is a God of Attributes. He is very stern but He is also Merciful, Just, Compassionate, Helpful, Creative, Omnipotent, Eternal.[3] The essential nature of God is directive. He is a God of Will and Command. "To Him belong creation and direction."[4] As such, nature too is a becoming and purposeful universe.

God has created the world and is interested in it. It is a good creation. The *Quran* says, "God hath made everything which He hath created most good....and breathed of His spirit unto him

(man)." "We have not created the Heavens and the earth and whatever is between them in sport; we have not created them but for a serious end." "We created you; then fashioned you; then said to the angels 'Prostrate yourself ' unto Adam."[5] Man is, thus, God's supreme creation. God gave man a heart, which according to Iqbal is the gift of mystic intuition. With this he can have the mystic experience of association with God who is Wholly Other. It is an immediate and total experience. It is an experience in the nature of a feeling and its content can be expressed only in activity and in judgements.[6] It was man alone who accepted the trust from God. "Verily we proposed to the Heavens and to the Earth and to the mountains to receive the "trust"; but they refused the burden and they feared to receive it. Man undertook to bear it, but has proved unjust, senseless." "Afterwards his Lord chose him (Adam) for Himself and was turned towards him, and guided him." "Lord said to the angels, "Verily I am about to place one in My stead on Earth." It is on the basis of the *Quran* that it is rightly felt that, (i) man is the chosen of God; (ii) he is His representative on earth; (iii) he is the trustee of a free personality accepted by Him, and (iv) he has the capacity of having the vision of God. 'God will not change the condition of men, till they change what is in themselves'.[7] Such are the views about creation, the world and man in the *Quran*.

The human goal is to make use of mystic and the intuitive capacity of man in order to have association with God. The final object is to change the human personality and to develop the attributes of God in it.[8] Man according to the *Quran* has so far proved unjust and senseless, but the endeavour is that he should awaken his higher consciousness so as to shoulder his responsibility and become creative. In the human and moral fields, the salient principle expressed in the *Quran* is of the unity of human origin and the brotherhood of man. "We created you from one breath."[9] The aim of man in the world is that he should reach the self-directive stage. That is why the object is to acquire the attributes of God and try to be a creative being.[10] The nature of the world is basically spiritual, and it is upto man to fulfil the trust accepted by him. It is in this sense that man has to make moral and spiritual progress so that he justifies the trust reposed in him and he becomes a fit representative of God on earth.

All this envisages the progress of man and the primacy of moral life in society. The idea of the brotherhood of man has been basic to the *Quran*. Few religions have tried to practice in on a

scale and with an earnestness as Islam. The lives of the Prophets Umar Ali, Usman and Abu Bakar, the original leaders of Islam, set the highest and the most enlightened standard of human conduct.[11] It is they who governed the tone of the Muslim society. We should here like to narrate an incident in the life of the Prophet which shows his faith in God and the loftiness of his character. Once an enemy of the Prophet found him all along while sleeping under a tree. On waking he saw the enemy warrior, Durther, confronting him with a drawn sword. The warrior spoke sarcastically, "O, Muhammad, who is there to save you from my sword now ?" "God" replied the Prophet, without flinching. The enemy was unnerved by this superhuman faith, and the sword fell from his hand. The Prophet immediately picked up the sword and said, "Well Durther who will save you now ?" "Alas, none," replied the dismayed enemy. "Then learn from me to be merciful." So saying he gave back the naked sword to Durther. Accordingly, faith in God and moral life have the highest priority in Isalm. Equality, solidarity and freedom are the foundations of all moral life. The distribution of wealth to the orphans and the needy has been recommended. The rules of morality and conduct have been laid down for all fields of human activity, both secular and religious. In fact, Islam makes no distinction between the secular life and the religious life, or between the empirical life or the spiritual life. There is thus, no bifurcation between the State and the Church.[12] Human loyalty is to God, and not to Kings or the state.[13] The greatest difference between *Sufism* and Islam is the other-worldliness of *Sufism* and the worldliness of Islam. There is no profane world. The Prophet says that the whole of earth is a mosque. It only implies that with fear of God, the laws of God and morality have to be observed in all spheres of human activity. The state is the instrument for realising the spiritual in the human organisation. This is a big contribution of Islam especially because early Christianity completely accepted the political authority of the Romans and took virtually to a monastic life.[14] Even when the state became Christian, the division between the secular and the spiritual continued. As against it, the *Quran* unites religion and the state, ethics and politics in one revelation.[15] The *Quran* is a complete code tending to awaken in man the proper consciousness of his relation with God, man and the universe. The fear of God and prayers to Him are the two important instruments to raise the spiritual level of man. Five prayers a day are prescribed. In order to avoid the anti-social effect of the solitary or contemplative life, congregational prayers

are recommended.

The Prophet had a clear call from God to preach his mission. The *Quran* is a revealed message. It speaks of the Prophet's vision of God. Man is deemed to be capable of becoming the representative of God on earth. So much so that Ali says, "I am the speaking *Quran*."[16] These are the premises which are accepted even by the orthodox. A Muslim saint, Abdul Cadus of Gagoh, said, "Mohammad of Arabia ascended the highest heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point I should never have returned." Iqbal feels that there is a danger of absorption in the mystic bliss that is there prior to the final mystic experience which is really creative and involves the mystic's return.[17] The final aim is not to see but to be, it is not an intellectual comprehension but it is a creative direction. The *Quran*, says Iqbal, is a book that emphasises the 'deed' rather that the 'word'. True, man is distinct from God, but he is not isolated from Him. He can have His vision. The final mystic state, according to Sheikh Ahmed, is not to stand in the presence of God and lose one's identity, but to receive the illumination of 'Divine Names,' and "Divine Attributes," and finally the illumination of the Divine Essence. Such is the mysticism of the Prophet of Arabia. It is a mysticism, says Iqbal, in which the unitary experience overflows. It gives ready-made judgements.[18] There is little doubt that it is an outstanding example of Prophetic mysticism'.

SUFISM[19]

Following the world-shaking mission of Prophet Mohammad *Sufism* has been, comparatively, a quietist mystic growth. In its influence and depth of devotion to God it has probably been the greatest mystic movement in the world. For the same reason, Al Qushairi, Al Ghazali and Arabi are among the greatest philosopher exponents of mysticism.

In its cheif theological assumptions, *Sufism* is entirely Islamic: Prophet Mohammad and the *Quran* continue to be its authorities : The Sufis adhere to the doctrines laid down by them. As was natural, there were serious differenes of interpretation and opinion about the Muslim theology between some great Sufis and the Muslim Church, leading to the persecution of the former. But, that hardly detracts from the faith of Sufis in Islamic tenets by which they swear.

Fundamentally, *Sufism* is monotheistic and its views

regarding the reality of the world, incarnation and transcendence of God are broadly Islamic. Of course, the Sufis claim that it is possible to establish a relation between God and man. The mode of this relationship, or its description, had been the main cause of differences between the Sufis, who relied on their individual experience, and the orthodox Muslim divines who felt that to talk of relation between the created man and God, who is wholly Transcendent, is sheer heresy. As against it, all mysticism is based on the possibility of this experience and relationship. Not only that. For the mystics this experience has the highest primacy, authority and certitude. They have made almost superhuman sacrifices to demonstrate their unswerving faith in the truth of their experience and belief.

The basic tenet of *Sufism* consists in destroying the life of the ego-self (*fana*) and then living in God-consciousness (*baqa*), or *'Ittihad'*, i.e., permanent union with God. For the Sufi, God, Prophet Mohammad, as the messenger of God, the *Quran*, as message of God, and the life of the Prophet are the chief guides to his faith. But, there is another guide too, the Will of God and the mystic experience that the Sufi gains. Here, in this life, he has a glimpse of the Face of God and an experience of that immortal life of God-consciousness. He is in union with Him and lives the life of God's Will, with his self-will obliterated. After his death he lives blissfully in the presence of God.

According to the *Quran*, the world has been created for man who is the highest among beings. God is Merciful. He, out of His Love, draws men to Him, whenever one is worthy of Him and is fit to become His instrument. It is the duty of man to remember and love Him, and Him alone. Rumi assumes the progress of man from matter, plants and animals and finally to the angelhood of God-consciousness.

Whether it is derived from the life of the Prophet or not, the Sufis, especially the early Sufis, lived a life of asceticism, poverty and other-worldliness. The *Quran*, like all the great scriptures, denounces love of worldly wealth and possessions, which, evidently, are an exhibition of one's egoism. Ghazali considers the love of the world and love of God as mutually exclusive. He quotes the Prophet : "God, may He be glorified and exalted, created nothing more inimical to Himself than the world. When He created the world He would not even look at it."[20] The *Quran* says, "The life of the world is but a sport and play."[21] Taking their cue from such references in the *Quran* and certain anecdotes from the life

of the Prophet, the Sufis emphasize general other-worldliness in their approach to life. But, the more important tenets of their faith are the love of God and complete surrender to Him. These form the positive basis for the entire ascetic and meditative life of the Sufi, whose final hope is the unitive experience of God. According to the Prophet, God said, "My Earth and Heaven contain me not, but the heart of my faithful servant contains me." "Consult thy heart and thou wilt hear the secret ordinance of God proclaimed by the heart's inward knowledge, which is real faith and divinity." "Who knows himself, knows God." "Beware of the discernment of the true believer, for he sees by the light of God."[22] By prayer Mohammad every time found ascension and nearness to God.

It has been believed that the excessive emphasis on ascetic other-worldliness is *Sufism* is the result of a reaction against the life of luxury and indulgence that become prevalent in high Islamic circles and the Caliphate following the world conquests of Islam. So much so, that Asim-al-Antaki wrote in the eighth century A.D. that Islam, having reached the stage of perfection, had become a faded garment, a dead creed, and the age had become cruel and terrible. It was, some assert, such reactions against the life of degrading and extravagant lust and pomp that drove all religious persons away from the world to a life of asceticism and meditation. The combination of the temporal with the spiritual, which had been effected in the lives of the Prophet and the Caliphs like Abu Bakar, was to an extent, undone later. Sufis took a line of their own, receding into a life of self-imposed poverty and meditation. This, they felt, had been practised in the Semetic world by all God's men like Moses, Jesus and others. In this tradition grew Ibrahim b. Adam, who said, "The beginning of service is meditation and silence, save for the recollection (*Dhikr*) of God." He prayed that God should give him His love, and Heaven to someone else. He said that one should spurn the world, fear God and obey Him. For love of the world, makes a man deaf and blind and enslaves him. God alone is man's hope.[23] A Persian Sufi, Mubarak of Merv, wrote a book justifying asceticism on the basis of the life of the Prophet. Similarly, Bishr of Merv recommended a life of loneliness and isolation. His outlook is characterised by extreme pessimism regarding life in the world. Shaqiq prescribes four points : (1) the knowledge of God (*Marifa*), (2) the knowledge of oneself, (3) the knowledge of God's Commandments and Prohibitions, and (4) the knowledge of God's adversary. In addition, he recommends submissiveness to God and the avoidance of all sins, evils and

covetousness. Iyad said that if one had known and feared death truly one would never eat, drink or possess anything, nor marry and desire children. He never smiled in his life except when his son died, for he felt he had died in accordance with the Will of God. A woman mystic, Rabia, remained unmarried all her life. She felt she existed in God and was altogether His; the marriage contract should be asked from God and not from her. The contract of marriage, she said, was for those who had a phenomenal existence. She lived in the shadow of His Command. Her prayer was : Burn me in hell if I worship Thee for fear of Hell; but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, withhold not Thine Everlasting Face.[24] She is the first exponent of the doctrine of Divine Love which is one of the chief Sufi doctrines.

Sufism, originally, became other-worldly, ascetic and meditative, just a system of Divine Love and Illumination. Later, this trend of other-worldliness was, to an extent, reversed and Sufis found the beauty of God hidden in the outer things of the world.[25] Ahmed B.A. Antioch advised : associate with the intelligent and the trustworthy but flee from the rest; give up sins. It draws you near God. One should repent sincerely. Pride in virtue is a sin too, give up evil deeds, lust and temptation. By His Grace you obey Him. When He helps you, you avoid passion and anger. He gives you knowledge to dispel ignorance and gives you satisfaction that you fear not poverty.[26] Rabia was grateful to God even for her adversity and suffering.[27]

Self-denial (*Zuhud*) of the world developed into a new positive doctrine of complete absorption in the fear, service and, finally, in the love of God, i.e., of the unitive experience with God. This doctrine of divine unity (*Tauhid*) with God became the final aim of Sufi theosophy. Muhasibi, an early mystic, deprecates the personal pursuit of desire, since it blinds one to the right direction. The love of this world and the love of the other world are both wrong. Salvation he says lies in the fear of God, in avoiding things of the world, obeying His commands and following the Prophet. He adds that God granted him good company and good guides, who preferred the world of God to the world of man and led men to the love of God. He gives a very fine picture of the Beatific vision. Al Muhasibi wrote a treatise on the love of God. Those who believe, he says, love God. Without His Grace, one is conceited and runs into error. God's favour is revealed in the heart. It is through love that man is transformed and receives the divine image. Continuous meditation and complete self-surrender are the

signs of the love of God. One is enlightened when God is kind.

Self-surrender to the Will of God, a point which had been stressed by the Prophet himself, became a cardinal feature of the Sufi tenets. So much so, that some Sufis would not even take medicine while sick, nor work to earn a living. Nor would they make any effort to avoid suffering. They felt that by resort to human ingenuity and device they would be opposing the Will of God. In the same line is the story of the Sufi who fell in the river. To both the questions of an on-looker as to weather he wanted to be rescued or to drown himself, he replied in the negative, meaning thereby that let God's will be done. This is typical example of the Sufi stress on surrender to the will of God and let things happen as they may. Rabia would not even pray for her own recovery from illness. It must, however, be recorded that this idea of God's will working in man is not merely negative. Other mystics talk of God alone working in the enlightened Sufi who has given up selfhood. God works through the mystic. Nun asserts that enlightened Sufis move as God causes them to move, and their words and sight are of God.[28] Actually, this emphasis on self-surrender is just a means to destroy self-will and to gain virtues of patience, love of God and fellow creatures etc. It is narrow self-centredness which divides man from God. A person, who had been a governor of a province, was asked to beg in the streets of Baghdad for a year, to seek for four years pardon from all those whom he had earlier wronged and then to do menial duties for a year. The first stage of *Dhikr* is to forget self.[29]

Islam believes in a Transcendent God. But, there are statements in the *Quran* which show God's immanence as well. As in the case of Christian mystics, the chief charge by orthodoxy against some Sufis has been of pantheism. In Islam, because of its adherence to the strict Transcendence of God, even the mention of relation with God is deemed heretical. Let us consider the views of some of the pantheistic and other Sufi mystics and theologians.

Nun, the Egyptian mystic, is supposed to be pantheistic. He saw His Unity and Testimony in birds, beasts and trees. For him God is All-knowing, All-prevading, All-just and All-wise. Abu Yazid (Bayazid) is another pantheistic Sufi. Zaehner feels that his pantheistic trend is due to the influence of Indian mysticism or training.[30] He said, "Glory to me. How great is my Glory?" From his own experience, he talked of the Prophet's ascension. He said somewhat as follows: "I became a bird whose body was of Oneness and whose wings were of Everlastingness. With my

egoism I cannot attain to Thee and I cannot escape from my selfhood. God replied : "Thou must win release from thy thouness (ego) by following my Beloved, Mohammad. Smear your eyes with dust of his feet and follow him continually." He prayed, "Adorn me in Thy Unity and clothe me in Thy Self-Hood, and raise me up to Thy Oneness, so that when Thy creation sees me, they will say, We have seen Thee; Thou wilt be That, and I shall not be there at all."[31] His doctrine implies the death of self (*Fana*) and the living of God in Man (*Baqa*). He feels that everything is nothing except God. The world is worthless, only God's service is worthy. When the self goes and the world is cast aside, man enters God and passes away into him. Al Kharraz says that the truth seeker must act in the fear of God and with a single-minded devotion and purpose. By continuous devotion God's light enters his heart. All this is God's Grace. With God's help, his heart overflows with God's love and he is near God.

Al Junaid of Baghdad also writes in a platonic, or a seemingly pantheistic vein. *Tauhid* is the separation of the Eternal from that which originated in Time. The entire quest of man is to return to the state in which he was before he came in Time. Then, only God was aware of his existence but not man. That existence is Timeless. This spiritual existence connotes knowledge of God, of man's existence in Him, without man knowing of his own individuality or existence. Man's existence is an act of God's will. The entire quest is for man's return to his original state. This virtually means a platonic idea in God. He wants man to overcome the limitation of his existence by the outpourings of His Being and Love. God strengthens man, guides him and gives him vision and righteousness so that he is in accord with Truth. This act of God in man is His gift. It is not the work of the worshipper. It originated with God, not man. One's self or ego should die and one should live in God or God consciousness. This is Junaid's doctrine of *Fana* or the destruction of the ego. The mystic does not cease to exist in the true sense of existence, as an individual. "Rather, his individuality, which is an inalienable gift from God, is perfected, transmuted and eternalized through God and in God."[32] This separate existence does not suggest pantheism. The return to continued existence, is a trial, as man is separated from God; but he is happy in this joy of the suffering of separation from God. Having enjoyed life in God after union with Him, and having been given a material life, He separates them from Himself. He makes them absent from the world when they are in union with Him. He

makes them present in the world when He separates them from Himself and grants them individuality again. Describing the above condition poetically, Junaid adds : "So in a manner we united are, and One; yet, otherwise disunion is our estate enternally." In Thy "Grace I feel Thee touch my inmost ground."

Hallaj did not claim divinity for himself. He only saw unity with God. His utterance "I am the Truth," it is generally felt, has been misunderstood. He spoke : "Through Truth I am truth eternally."[33] He concedes that everything happens by the Grace of God. Hallaj's is a case of crucification. He delighted in the Will of God being done. He prayed even for his persecutors : "And these Thy servants who are gathered to slay me, in zeal for Thy religion and in desire to win Thy favour, forgive them, O Lord, and have mercy upon them; for verily if Thou hadst revealed to them that which Thou hast revealed to me, they would not have done what they have done; and if Thou hadst hidden from me that which Thou hast hidden from them, I should not have suffered this tribulation. Glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thou doest and glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thy willest." Hallaj, took Jesus as his example and deemed man, in a way, to be God incarnate, "I am the Creative Truth."[34]

Apparently, these are pantheistic utterances. In Justification of Hallaj, Ghazali writes that during the unitive state, the individual has a separate identity. But, the experience being non-rational and intuitive, it is so intense and intoxicating that, while describing the state near the time of experience, one is apt to give the imagery of oneness or identity with God, whereas actually it is a case only of union.[35] The Sufi poetry contains imagery of intense love for God. Later dancing also became a feature of Sufi ritual to gain ecstasy, e.g., whirling dance was started by Rumi.

Because of its somewhat platonic assumptions, the burden of Sufi thought was the return to God and union with Him in the premordial sense. But, this eternal life of union with Him could be achieved only through the surrender of the ego-self of man by meditation, ascetic practices and a continued other worldliness. The dominant strain of intense love has also been the feature of the Sufi life. Man lives even after union, but it is *Baqa*, a life of God-consciousness. Man still has a separate empirical identity, but it is something devoid of the lower self. He is full of God. It is the description of this state of union with God which has so often caused confusion and invited the ire of the Orthodoxy. It is clear from Junaid's description that the new personality is a God-

conscious one. It is no longer a self-centred individuality. The person is conscious of his union with God. But, he is burning with the suffering of separation. At the same time, it is a source of joy to him, for it enables God to express His Will, thereby giving an opportunity to the mystic to show his love for God. Nuri's poem also clearly expresses a similar sentiment : "Lo ! I have severed every thought from me, And died to selfhood, that I might be Thine. How long, my heart's Beloved ? I am spent : I can no more endure this banishment."[36]

Niffari writes of the same experience in somewhat the following words : "I saw this world to be a delusion, and I saw the heavens to be a deception. I cried out 'O Knowledge' and there was no answer; Again, I cried out 'O Gnosis' and there was no answer. I saw that every created thing had deserted me. I was left alone. Nothing availed save the Mercy of God. He asked from me, where are thy action, knowledge, and gnosis ? And I saw only the fire. After it, He unveiled His Gnosis of Uniqueness and the Fire died down. He said, 'I am thy Friend' and I was stabilised. 'I am thy Gnosis.' 'I am thy Seeker.' 'And I went forth."[37] Here the relation of 'You' and 'I' is maintained even till the final stage of enlightenment.

Islam is against the idea of incarnation, God being Transcendent. But, the doctrine of "Logos" or "Idea of Mohammad" was accepted by Al Ghazali. He reconciles a Transcendent God with a theistic world. The aim of man is to achieve union with this "Idea of Mohammad" which was in pre-eternity as His likeness, in so far as anything can be His likeness. The goal is to rise and have union with the Idea, i.e., lead mankind back to Him. Ibnal Farid in some of his poems claims union with the idea of Mohammad. In other poems he is claiming unity with God which would expose him to the charge of pantheism; e.g., "All men are sons of Adam," but. "I alone amongst my brethern have attained to the sobriety of union." "And my spirit is a spirit to all spirits" and "the universe flows from the bounty of my nature." Islam, influenced by the Christian and the platonic thoughts, accepts the concept of the Idea of Mohammad, the creative principle. It was in God before the creation was made. All men have to return to that stage of the Idea of Mohammad or the Pole of Logos.[38]

The charge of pantheism, perhaps, could more justifiably be levied against Al Farid and Arabi, the greatest Arab mystic. Arabi's ideas are as follows : (1) God as Being and Existence is One (2) The Universe has a Relative Being. It is both eternal-existent and

temporal-non-existent. Being in knowledge of God, it is eternal and existent. Outside God it is temporal and non-existent. (3) God is Transcendent and Immanent; the Creator and the Creation are different. (4) The Universe being separate, exists by His Will; the Divine Name and universal concepts are his agents. (5) Before existence the things of the world were latent in the Mind of God as prototypes and were one with the Divine Essence. These prototypes are intermediate between God (Absolute Reality) and the temporal world. (6) There is no union with God. Only there is realisation of the already existing fact of oneness of man with God. (7) The creative and rational principle is the idea of Mohammad, and this finds expression in the perfect man. (8) Each prophet is a Logos of God. Mohammad is the greatest of prophets; all these prophets converge in the Reality, the microcosm in which are reflected the Attributes of God. Mohammad is the creative principle of the world and the perfect man is the cause of the world. The perfect man knows God. The universe is the epiphany of God's desire to be known. The perfect man knows God, loves God, is loved by God. For man alone was the world made. Prophets are also saints and sainthood is their better aspect. All saints are the manifestation of the spirit of Mohammad. Arabi's writings suggest that he might be that perfect man, or the seal of saints, as Mohammad is the seal of prophets. He was attacked and dubbed as a pantheist. He is somewhat more of a monist than a pantheist, since the world is only phenomenal. He influenced even Christian mystics.

Apparently pantheistic ideas were expressed by Iraqi in his work called *Lamaat.* He wrote something like this : 'Though Adam's son in outward form I seem, my fatherhood of God is proved by an inward gleam. The Universe holds my (God's) image, each molecule attests me. Each man moves in my shape; ocean is a drop from my pervading Sea. In all that is, I manifest, in fine; Yea, and the greatest Name of God is mine. He further says that Lovers part and re-unite. I am love. In all the world I have no home. Like the sun I shine in every atom. Every tongue bears my word and I hear with all ears. Love soars beyond the reach of human mind, by parting and re-union unconfined.[39]

The doctrine of the Perfect Man was developed by Al-Jili. The Pure Being descends by three stages of Oneness, He-ness and I-ness. Originally, He is without Name and attributes, the pure, the Absolute. At that stage, man, by virtue of his Essence, is the Cosmic Thought. This thought assumes flesh and connects Absolute Being

with the world of Nature. By the same three stages, the mystic may aspire to reach God. Finally, by becoming 'perfect man' without attributes, he may return to merge in the Absolute. This is the idea of the descent of Universal or pure Spirit into matter and of the ascent of man out of matter. It is the mystic who reverses this order. By becoming the perfect man, without any attributes, he returns as Absolute. He retraces his descent into ascent.[40] All this is a Platonic concept.

The same idea of divine union by self-effacement is expressed by Attar :

Let us but see the Fount from which we flow,
And, seeing, lose Ourselves therein !
The Sun of my Perfection is a Glass
Wherein from Seeing into Being Pass
All who, reflecting as reflected see
Themselves in Me, and Me in Them; Not me,
But all of Me, that a contracted Eye
Is Comprehensive of Infinity:

As Water lifted from the Deep, again
Falls back in individual Drops of Rain
Then melts into the Universal Main.
All you have been, and, seen, and done, and thought,
Not you but I, have seen and been and wrought:
I was the sin that from Myself rebel'd:

Pilgrim, Pilgrimage, and Road,
Was but Myself toward Myself: and Your
Arrival but Myself my own Door:
Who in your Fraction of Myself behold
Myself within the Mirror Myself hold
To see Myself in, and each part of Me
That sees himself, though drown'd shall ever see.
Come you lost Atoms to your Centre draw,
And be the Eternal Mirror that you saw:
Rays that have wander'd into Darkness wide
Return, and back into your sun subside.[41]

Nizami also wrote in the Same Strain :

First He and Last, in All that is and lives,
Naughts Being, and to Nothing Being gives:
'Nizami' Clay, That by His Feet is trod,
A Furrow is, where grows the seed of God.[42]

Rumi too suggests a similar idea, for he says :

> Into my heart's night
> Along a narrow way
> I groped; and lo ! the light,
> An infinite land of day.[43]

Practically, all the poems quoted above express pantheistic ideas. In some, man's descent from God and ascent back again into Him are indicated. It is the idea of merger of identity. In many of these utterances the difference between the Creator and the created has been kept in tact. Simultaneously, some of them indicate an apparently contrary idea of the descent of man and of ascent into Him. But, this is Platonic rather than pantheistic. Ultimately, man loses all consciousness of being a man and a part of creation. He is entirely destroyed, and absorbed in the Divine Essence. As indicated by Mohd. Amin, this is the stage reached by meditational methods. But, with most Sufi mystics the idea of man or the mystic is of a separate being. This is in consonance with Islamic theology.

In view of the above context, whether the final state of achievement is of identity with God or union with Him, is a question which has exercised the minds of theologians. After the stage of *Fana*, or the elimination of the ego or self-will, is achieved, starts the next stage of *Baqa* (God consciousness) or of *'Ittihad* (union with God). In that state of union all activity is of God and His Will. The mystic is really the organ through which God Wills and Acts. *Ittihad* is a permanent state of union. It is not a negative state but a positive one. The mystic finds God in all things and shares the life of his fellows. He goes among the people, marries, works and takes part in social intercourse. One may or may not call it a state of *Halul*, or God living and working in man, but it is the condition of the final achievement of permanent union.[44]

This doctrine of *Halul*, or inter-penetration of the human and the Divine, was indicated by Hallaj. In this he followed Muhasibi. But, the latter, and his pupil Junaid, clearly stress the duality between man and God even in the final state.[45] God should cause us to die to ourselves and to live in Him. But man continues as an individual with a separate identity, all the same. Of course, he is also united with Him. Most Sufis rejected the doctrine of *Halul*, or of identity with God. Even this union *(Tauhid)* is sometimes described as *Ittihad* or identity. The mystic imbibes the attributes of God and makes them his own. For Al Farid *Ittihad*, is a permanent union. At the time of the internal experience, or even

of ecstasy, the mystic gets the feeling of oneness. But, he returns to the world. *Tauhid* is a pemanent union with God even while in life.[46] He lives the life of God and His Will. The lose of self-will is not the loss of one's being. In fact, he is the organ through which God works. Whether one is mentioned as united with the Director, *Pir* or with the Idea of Mohammad, or with God, is entirely a matter of description. But, this mystic has a personality even after death. Such mystics are supposed to come into contact with their disciples even after their death. According to Rumi, it is a transmutation. They are not non-existent even after death.[47]

Ghazali also clearly maintains that in this final stage the separate personality of the mystic is not lost; only self-will is gone. Even if we take the utterances of Hallaj or other so-called pantheistic Sufis, one thing is evident. Their assertions about identity are meant only to indicate the loss of self-will. The individual is still there and it is the individual who is describing his stage of union. Even the doctrine *Halul* means nothing more than complete obedience to God's Will. It is not a doctrine of incarnation. It was Hallaj who prayed to God to forgive his persecutors. He did not pray to his own self. The majority of Sufi mystics clearly accept the separateness of the mystic who, after his union with God, becomes His instrument. Even the description by the so-called pantheistic Sufis like Hallaj, if considered closely, mean not a whit more than that. The inference is obvious that the final mystic stage in Sufism is not of identity. Only the life of the mystic is not so active as in the case of the prophetic mystic.

Nicholson believes that so long as the transcendence of God is accepted, all description of immanence can only mean panentheism and not pantheism.[48] In fact, the extreme insistence on the elimination of sin and self-will in all Sufi systems also recognised man's moral responsibility which is not there in a pantheistic system. A Sufi mystic says : "Whoever believes not in predestination is an infidel and whoever says it is impossible to disobey God is a sinner."[49] The place of evil is there as a counterpart of good and in order that good may prevail. Love is fundamental to Sufism. And, love involves two, the lover and the beloved. Rumi clearly believes in human freedom and responsibility. He feels that ultimately not only all Muslims, but all souls will be saved by God.[50] Ghazali emphatically talks of the creation being other than God and being created by God's power out of nothing.[51] In Sufism, too, there is the belief, as propounded by Ghazali that in the soul of man there is an eternal ray of God.[52] All effort of man is to establish union

with this aspect of God in man which is eternal. It is human blindness and narrowness that divides him from this eternal God in him.

In sum, the separateness of man is generally so well recognized in Sufism that Muhasibi says, "love of God is love of all that He loves, and it must find its expression in dealing with His creatures in that spirit of compassion in which He Himself deals with them."[53]

Of the twelve sects of Sufis ten are orthodox and heretical. The Sufi way of life is believed and asserted by all big theorists of Sufism as being in the authentic tradition of the Prophet. They deprecate the rational theorists who do not know the intensive knowledge (*Marifa*). Subsequently, arose some Sufi sects among whom the contempt in which a Sufi was held was deemed to be a sign of a true worshipper of God. On this basis they started indulging in abhorent acts to invite people's contempt so that the devotee could show his disregard of public opinion. For comparison it is interesting to note that a similar practice arose among the *Pasupata* sect of Saivism who also resorted to odd and repulsive practices that evoked the disapprobation and disgust of the onlookers.[54] This is another example to show that all attempts to destroy the human ego by unnatural or artificial means, whether ascetic, tantric or purely meditational, are self-defeating. Because, these by themselves become subtly or grossly egoistic, not involving any progress of the pilgrim. Hence humility and keeping oneself involved in God's service in natural environment are the only ways to invite His Grace, which is not bestowed in response to any calculated effort. That is why in Sufi mystic practices, it is only the preliminary stages of progress that can be earned. The rest are bestowed purely by God as an Act of His Grace.

Pir-i-Ansari expresses a deep devotional feeling of love seeking to see the Face of God. This feeling of intense love of God is characteristic of all Sufi poetry. Numerous Sufis like Hallaj and others have laid their lives in pursuance of their faith in the will of God. Ansar sang in the following strain : Poverty is my pride. Lovers let all the world go by and raise to Heaven their battle-cry, O Generous, O Wise, O Beautiful, who forgives sins. O Eternal, who is not known by senses, whose Essence and quality are matchless. O Creator, show the way to every erring heart; O God give me Thy Light, Bounty or Goodness whatever may be best, make that Bounty to me. God grant me patience and forbearance. How do I know what is best for me. Give me what You think best

for me.[55]

It is indeed a piece of a sublime prayer, marked by a sense of humility and self-surrender. And yet it is so profound in its mystic wisdom. The above poem shows typically : (a) the separateness of man from God, (b) love and self-surrender being the way to God, (c) God being a God of Attributes, Merciful and Bountiful, (d) God being interested in helping the erring man to raise him to the level of perfection, and (e) complete submission to the Will of God; for what is to be sought from God is also left to the Will of God. This aspect of Sufi mysticism is significant. The seeker is not willing to take any step on his own. He leaves everything to God.

The Sufi path to God comprises two parts. The first part is to be traversed by the effort of the devotee. These are called 'stages of progress' of the Sufi. The second part is called 'states' and these are the gift of God, as against stages which are earned by the effort of the seeker. The first stage is "*Taube*". This is the conscious effort of the seeker to leave the things of the world and devote himself wholly to the service of God. The details of various stages which are about twenty or even more include, (1) withdrawal from the world and solitariness to rid oneself of evil habits; (2) the awe and fear of God; (3) abstinence, renunciation and silence; (4) repentance for sin; (5) humility and contentment; (6) trust and faith in God; (7) constant awareness of God; (8) the avoiding of vices and the cultivating of virtues of contentment, patience, satisfaction, etc.

Further, there are the states (some of which are even deemed as stages) which are the gift of God. These are : (1) the service of God; (2) the giving up of all desires and leaving everything to God; (3) sincerity, truthfulness, uprightness and other moral virtues like generosity, chivalry, etc., (4) the remembrance of God; (5) Poverty.

Prophet Mohammad said that "the poor shall enter Paradise five hundred years before the rich."[56] This maxim has been the basis of the other-worldliness of Sufi doctrine and practices. Though the Prophet all his life fought for the public cause and his whole life was spent in pursuit of these socio-spiritual causes, Sufism from the very start has been other-worldly. And though marriage was not given up, other things, including normal work in the world, were abandoned, sometimes completely in order to pursue the Sufi path. The penultimate states are intuitive knowledge, the love of God as a consequence of God's love for man, and the constant

yearning for God. These are purely the gifts of God.

In the Sufi system of *Sarraj*, meditation, contemplation, tranquillity, nearness to God, love yearning, certitude, etc., are deemed to be the states and gifts from God and not the result of man's effort. According to Al Ghazali, God answered his prayer and made it easy for him to give up reputation, wealth, wife, children and friends. He has made a detailed description and analysis of the Sufi path. Good companionship, character, solitude, good advice, fortitude, poverty and self-denial, love, contemplation, meditation, faith and trust in God, and the fear of and yearning for God, are the virtues and ways that lead one on to the Sufi path. Sins, the love of worldly goods, desire, pride, etc., have to be given up.

In due course the institution of guide and disciple became an important organ of Sufi practice. Regular convents were formed where divine service was done. Each *Khankah* (institution) had its own *Pir* round whom gathered the disciples who were assigned duties by the *Pir*. Apart from teaching and meditation, the duties involved service of all kinds at the *Khankah*. Celibacy was not insisted upon. Most mystics were married. Dance, especially whirling dance started by Rumi, and singing were practices common at the *Khankah*. Each centre had its own routine and rituals. In some cases, Sufis were laymen working in life, but joining at the centre only at the ritual dances or the like. Ecstasy was induced by dance and even by stimulants and drugs. The Sufis believed in the value of temporary ecstasy and exaltation.

The above, in brief, are the essentials of Sufism. By and large, Sufism is orthodox in adhering to the strictly monotheistic concept of Islam. The world is God's creation, though *becoming* and impermanent. It is real all the same. The utterances of Sufis regarding the transient character of the world are merely warnings to man against his being engrossed in the things and desires of the world. There is little doubt that the emphasis is on the evil of the egoistic approach. God-consciousness (*Baqa*) can start only when egoism dies (*Fana*). But, it is equally not in doubt that the Sufi approach for training on the mystic path is other-worldly. Though married life is not given up, the centres of training are separate. Meditational and other training is confined mainly to the *Khankah*. It cannot be denied that Sufi participation in the socio-political life of the community is marginal and not direct. Even the mystic himself does not re-enter life after his achievement, except as the leader of the mystic group that stands segregated from the

general life of the community. This is mainly, we believe, due to the fact that, while the doctrine of the Will of God is accepted, the stress is on mere submission to His Will, without interruption from one's own will. This is epitomized in the lines we quoted from Ansar, when he said that he did not know what gifts to ask from God. He should give him what He thought best for him. The same is the approach of the seeker who fell in the river and would not indicate to the onlookers, or decide himself, whether he wanted to be rescued or die. His response was that let God's Will be done. Apart from this submission, there is no emphasis on carrying out the Will of God in a definite direction. Hence direct socio-political participation, as was done by Prophet Mohammad himself, was not there at all. That is also the reason for some confusion on the issue whether the final stage is of identity or merger in God. Concepts like the platonic idea, or the Idea of Mohammad, and ultimately of one's return to the same place from where one had come, are also due to the same reason, namely, that of the superman having no active or creative role to play in the world. True, the superman does work as a *Pir* to help others on the way to God's life. But, direct involvement in the world of man is not there, or is avoided. Evidently, if after the final mystic experience, the Immanence of God's Will does not provide a directive to the mystic to accomplish God's work or service on earth, confusion and controversies arise as to what is the nature of that unitive and intuitive experience, i.e., whether it is an experience of identity or merger, or whether it is only a trans-subjective experience. But, for the Sufis the final state transcends all definition and description. According to Attar it is the state of a profound mystery.[57] It is an experience all the same in so far as the person maintains an individuality. But, in the case of the Prophetic mystic the directive force of the personality is God's Will as understood by him. And, what is extremely important, the mystic's love of God must find expression in God's love for all men. Hence all the differences between the Prophetic mysticism of Prophet Mohammad and Sufism. Sufism is another classic example where, as stated by saint Abdul Qadus, the intoxicating bliss and delights of the mystic heights have proved too strong for the Sufis to resist. And, this despite the clear direction of the Prophet to the contrary. So often Muslim theologians and historians have lamentfully mentioned Sufi other-worldliness as the cause of Islamic decline.

As such Sufism cannot be classed with the Prophetic mysticism of Mohammad. It is undoubtedly a theistic mysticism

because intense love and devotion are its primary features. Nor does it belong to the class of Isolation mysticism. Sufis were not purely quietists. They took active part in initiating other persons into the mystic path. They influenced significantly the moral tone and life of the society in which they lived. Though such influence was generally indirect, yet it was distinct and directive all the same. This is clear from the very marked influence of Sufism on Indian society, especially in the Muslim world. We should, therefore, call Sufism as a border line case between Quietist mysticism and Activity mysticism. It belongs to the Semi-active class, with clear leanings on the active side because of the example and teachings of the Prophet of Islam.

11

The Radical Bhakti School

Some authors take the simplistic way of calling all the so-called Bhakti movements as a single line of development including the devotional systems of Vaisnava and Saiva saints, the Sant tradition, the radical Bhakti saints, and the Sikh religion. Thoughtful historians and sociologists have already discarded this superficial view. We should like to consider the proposition from the religious and mystic point of view. We have earlier indicated broadly the kind of mysticism practised by the Vaisnava and Saiva saints of the medieval and the post-medieval period. Let us now try to state and understand the mystic system of saints like Kabir, Namdev, Tukaram and Ravidas who are known to belong to the radical school of Bhakti. Some of these saints are called as forming the Sant tradition of Northern India.

Unfortunately, not very much is known about the lives of these saints. A considerable part of the available material is replete with stories of miracles performed by them. This material hardly gives their precise views on socio-religious and mystic issues. Of course, the hymns framed by them as prayers to or in praise of God are available. Some of them stand incorporated in the *Guru Granth*. The most prominent representative of this group is Kabir. We shall give his views and those of a few other saints of the radical Bhakti School in order to appreciate and classify their mystic thesis.

Kabir

Kabir was the child born to a widow who, fearing disrepute, abandoned him. He was lifted and brought up by a poor Muslim couple who worked as weavers.[1] Bhandarkar believes, on chronological and other grounds, that it is very doubtful if Kabir was a disciple of Ramanand. There is hardly any reference to Ramanand in Kabir's hymns.[2] This fact is very significant especially when we find that Kabir believes in the great sanctity and value of the institution of *Guruship*. In his early days he spent

considerable time with Sufi saints.[3] He married, had children and earned his living as a weaver.

Broadly speaking, Kabir is a monotheist. His entire approach and religion are based on his personal mystic experience. God is for him both Transcendent and Immanent.[4] It is possible for man to have union with Him. Kabir claims such communion with God. We know that Vaisnavism had the four pillars of its faith on which its entire structure was based. These were the acceptance of the authority of Vedas and Upanisads and all the doctrines and systems these prescribed; the validity of the caste system and its social ramifications; the doctrine of incarnation; and the external forms of worship, including idol worship, formalism, ritualism and the like. Kabir, in common with the other saints of the radical Bhakti School, repudiated all these four doctrines. As a monotheist, he believed in the equality of men of all castes and creeds.[5] Generally, the expression of Kabir's message follows that of the Sufi saints. For him asceticism and fasting had no value unless accompanied by real and devotional worship.[6] His God was a God of Attributes. The way to Him was the method of devotional love and meditation.[7] Though he denied the incarnation of Vishnu, it is strange that his immediate disciple Dharam Das raises Kabir to the level of an incarnation of the Absolute.[8] But in the Indian tradition, this is a common way of expressing a person's greatness by admiring followers. Kabir's definition of God is not easy to follow. He calls Him both with and without Attributes, Personal and Impersonal, Finite and Infinte, Conscious and Unconscious, and Transcendent and Immanent. He is above all opposites and Ineffable. He also talks in pantheistic terms when he says, "And the Lord Himself takes form."[9] Sometimes his descriptions appear monistic. That is probably so because the symbolic descriptions of the mystic experiences are always likely to be misunderstood. But, there is little doubt that his overall approach is monotheistic. Like the Muslim saints he calls God the light.[10]

The goal of life is to have union with God. He emphasises the presence of God in all hearts. Union with Him is possible only through the method of love and devotion to God. Kabir claims such union, "I have obtained the Supreme State." His is the way of interiority.[11] His cosmogenic utterances follow both Muslim and Hindu traditions and are herefore, somewhat confusing.[12] As among Sufis, the Guru has a very important role in the mystic life; for he says, "If Hari becomes angry still there is some chance, but if the Guru is angry there is no chance whatever."[13] He describes

the journey or the ascent to God in terms similar to those of Hallaj; Abandoning the actions pertaining to humanity (*Nasut*), one sees the sphere of angels (*Malakut*); then leaving even the sphere of majesty (*Jabarut*) one gets the vision of divinity (*Lahut*); but when these four are left behind then comes *Hahut* where there is no death or separations and where *Yama* (God of death) finds no entrance. Humanity (*Nasut*) is darkness, *Malakut* is angelic, in *Jaburat* shines the Majestic Light (*Nur Jalal*) in *Hahut* one finds beautiful light (*Nur Jamal*) and in *Hahut* is the dwelling place of Truth (*Haq*)."[14]

In the eighth *Ramaini* Kabir takes a monotheistic stand, for he clearly rejects that there is identity between man and God at the final stage of achievement, as indicated in the "that thou art" of the *Chhandogya Upanishads*.[15]

Kabir's teachings have a distinct moral basis. "The man who is kind and who practices righteousness, who remains passive amidst the affairs of the world, who considers creatures on earth as his ownself, he attains the immortal being, the True God is ever with him,"[16] Kabir was a protagonist of *Ahimsa*. He felt one could not be free from the sin of 'killing even if one heard crores of *Puranas*'. The principle of *Ahimsa* was extended even to the destruction of flowers.[17] He mentions egoism as the main hurdle in the spiritual progress.[18] The mode of devotion is mostly interior and no external formalism is involved. The method of worship used by his followers is purely of praises and prayers.[19]

An important aspect of any mysticism or religion is its approach towards the World. While it cannot be said that Kabir was an ascetic, his view of the reality of the world is not unambiguous. Macauliffe writes that Kabir was asked whether the world was real or unreal. He replied that the world was unreal like the impossibilities mentioned in the following hymn "Can Rajaram cook cakes of ice ? Can any man in his senses eat them ? Can a lion seated in his den prepare betel ? Can a mammoth rat serve it when made up ? Can a mouse sing a song or rejoicing from house to house ? Can a tortoise blow a shell ? Can a barren woman's son go to wed and build a mansion in the sky ?[20] In this context it is important to understand that Kabir never took up the role of a social reformer, much less the criticism of political malpractices. Both before and after his spiritual achievement, there was no attempt at organisational work in any field of human activities. Even in the religious domain he never tried to create a separate movement. Nor did he appoint any successor even though he

evidently believed in the institution of Guruship. Like that of the Sufi and other saints his was only an individual attempt at spiritual attainment.

As to inequality in the world, he seems to ascribe it to one's own acts. He said, 'To one man God hath given silks and satins and a *niwar* bed, others have not even a ragged coat or straw in their houses to lie on. Indulge not in envy and bickering, O, my soul,do good deeds and gain their reward."[21] In this background, it is quite natural to expect Kabir's non-interference in the social and temporal affairs and institutions of the times. He only tried to discipline his own self and never sought to form a new organisation or institution.

In sum, Kabir is clearly theistic, though sometimes he uses a monistic and a pantheistic language. He even calls the world as virtually unreal. Though he was not an ascetic, the world, as an arena of activity, had not much of a value for him. In his cosmogenic utterances, he uses both the Hindu and the Muslim concepts. As in the case of the Sufis, the goal of life is union with god. His description of the ascent of man is certainly in Sufi terms. We are not at all suggesting a Sufi influence on him. We only want to indicate a similarity between Kabir's mystic experience, which is purely personal to him, and the Sufi mystic system. Like the Hinayana, his mysticism is for the few. True, the principles of his mysticism are different from those of Hinayana, but his approach towards life is, on the whole, the same. This kind of mysticism we have called a theistic mysticism of Rest or Union. It is the same as in the case of the Sufis and most of the Christian mystics. Such mysticism has generally an ambivalent attitude towards life which is not of primary importance in the system. Kabir's hymns quoted earlier, almost deny the reality of the world. In any case, it is evident that his mysticism has not much of social concern. This feature of his mystic system, like that of the other Saints of the Radical School, is common to all mystics of Rest, or those that are semi-active.

Namdev

Namdev, who belonged to a low caste, appeared in the thirteenth century in Maharashtra. He was one of the first saints to make a bold attack on Brahamanism and the caste structure. A century earlier than Kabir, he denied the authority of the Vedas, the caste system, the theory of incarnation and the utility of

formalism, ritualism and idol worship. The substance of his teaching includes the purity of heart, humility, self-surrender, forgiveness and the love of God.[22]

While his deep devotion to God clearly shows his monotheism, he also uses pantheistic similes by mentioning that waves, bubbles, foam and water are not different. Everything is God, there is nothing but God. Consider the world and God as one.[23] Chaturvedi says, "Saint Namdev seemed to believe in both transcendence and immanence, in pantheism and non-dualism. His devotion was purely of the non-attributional Absolute."[24] Simultaneously, Namdev says that through reflection one sees everything to be the creation of God. God is everywhere, in all hearts and in all things.[25] God is Immanent in the universe. All this only shows that persons describing their mystic experiences should not be taken literally or their utterances considered out of context. Instead, inferences should be based on the totality of their views, especially as reflected in their lives. Seen in the over-all context of his hymns, there is no doubt about Namdev being a monotheist.

Like the Sufi saints, Namdev's general approach is to a considerable extent other-worldly. Explaining the way to God Namdev replied, "The strength of the contempt of the world should be in the body as an unchanging companion. One should lay aside differences between himself and others, and feel no anxiety for things of the world."[26] Writing about Namdev and other saints Ranade feels, "mystics of this period show an all absorbing love of God, which would not allow a rightful performance of one's deities before God-absorption." "The conflict between a rightful performance of duty and all-absorbing love of God has existed at all times and in all countries. But it seems that the saints of this period were inclined to lean in the latter rather than in the former direction, and exhibited the all-absorbing character of God-realisation. God indeed is an all-devourer and it seems from the examples of these saints that He devours also the performance of ones own natural duties."[27]

"He (Namdeva) tells us that it is impossible that the pursuit of God can be coupled with a life of *Samsara*. If it had been possible for a man to find God while he was pursuing *Samsara*, then Sanuka and others would not have grown mad after God. If it had been possible for him to see God while carrying on the duties of a householder, the great Suka would not have gone to the forest to seek God. Had it been possible for people to find God in their homes, they would not have left them to find out. Namdev has

left all these things, and is approaching God in utter submission (Abg. 83)."[28]

Namdev's cosmogenic views are broadly orthodox. He says that the world was created by God through Maya. "Maya is the name of the power that placeth man in the womb."[29] In a way, he denounces the world and even human birth. He indicates that everything is unreal, God alone is real; shops, shopkeepers, men and everything are a phantom.[30] He seeks release from Maya or the world which brings death. Thus, he talks in terms of renunciation by saying, "Nama gave up trade and devoted himself entirely to worship." He calls even pilgrimages as worldly acts to be abandoned.[31] Evidently, what he recommends for being given up is not the world as such but the attractions of the world. For he also considers the world and God as one. All this suggests that whatever be Namdev's position regarding reality of the world, the same had not much of significance for him as a worthwhile medium of activity and spiritual growth. From the overall angle, Namdev's attitude remains somewhat other-worldly.

The saint's path of union with God is the one of loving devotion and remembering God. "I perform worship, sing God's praises and meditate on God for eight *Paher* in a day."[32] He rejects all formalism, idol worship and pilgrimages. He feels that all austerities and asceticism are of no use unless deception is given up.[33] For him that person is righteous who sees God in all objects and has no pride and egoism.[34] Purity of conduct, he suggests, should never be given up. He believes God to be the Creator who regards all alike.[35] In fact, he holds man responsible for his acts and the entanglements caused thereby. At the same time he does not seem to believe in the law of Karma, for he says, "When there were no *Sastras* or *Vedas*, whence did *Karma* come ?"[36] For him God is a God of Attributes who is compassionate to the poor. In his utterances there is considerable ridicule of the Brahmanical superficialities and ritualism.

He is a believer in the role of the guru. He asserts that his mind was awakened by the instructions of the guru, and that by reflection one sees everything to be the creation of God. He claims communion with God when he speaks "Nama has met God." "I feel real love for God. My doubts are dispelled."[37] In his hymns he claims God's miraculous interventions on his behalf in order to reveal Himself to him, or help him.

Even after his union with God, there remains, as before, a broad streak of other-worldliness in Namdev's life. He created no

organisation and made no such effort in the religious field. At one time, he gave up all work in order to remain absorbed in meditations. Except for making a strong condemnation of the cast structure and ritualism he did not enter the field of social reconstruction. The goal of life is a mystic union with God. It is, as in the case of Sufi mystics and Kabir, a mysticism of Rest or blissful union with God.

Tukaram

Tukaram is another Sudra saint of Maharashtra of the fifteenth century. Though he married, he gave up family life and work. His share of property he threw into the river. He devoted himself entirely to the worship of God and the singing of His praises.[38] He condemns formalism and suggests purity of heart, devotion and faith.

He is a monotheist and refers to men as children of God. God, he says, could be attained through love alone. He condemns all austerities and rites as useless for the path to God.[39] Egoism, he believes is the hurdle in the way to God. He claims oneness with God and having lost himself in Him. He says his "I" is gone. Instead, God is everything in him.[40] He suggests that one should have no hostile feeling towards anyone. This, he says, is the excellent way. One should devote one's mind doing good to others.[41] It is somewhat anomalous that while he asks others not to leave the world, he virtually did so himself.

According to Bhandarkar, his writings show conflicting trends. While he indicates monotheistic concepts, he also expresses Vedantic ideas of the identity of the soul with God, and of the illusory character of the world. He writes, "A sugar crystal and sugar powder are different only in name." He calls the world as unreal likens it to a dream.[42] For him birth and death are all false. At the same time he condemns ideas of monism and soul's identity with God as mere buffoonery.[43] He seems to have faith in the *Vedas* for he says that 'the shameless one who speaks heresy in opposition to the *Vedas* is an object of scorn among holymen.[44] He remained, by and large, a devotee of love and a singer of songs in praise of God. He denied the utility of mechanical rites. But, he showed no concern whatsoever with the social aspect of life which, in a way, he gave up. His mystic approach is clearly other-worldly and similar to that of Namdev.

Ravidass

Born at Benaras, Ravidass was a leather worker, belonging to a low caste. His way to God is through humility and self-surrender. He says, "Hari is in all and all is in Hari." "Thou art I;" and the difference "between Thee and me" is like "between water and its ripples, and between gold and a gold bracelet". "He is One and only two by illusion." "One is many and many is one. Hari, how am I to say that there is a second one."[45] He preaches against caste restrictions and the theory of incarnation. For him God is a God of Grace. Ravidass looks on the world as the play of God. He is inclined to regard it as illusory and not worth paying attention to. He says, "The play is false, only the player is true."[46] Though, originally, he started life as an idol worshipper and made an idol out of a hide,[47] he describes all external forms and rites as useless. It is the human passions that degrade man, he feels. For Ravi dass the path of God is path of love, the purity of the heart and the removal of all sensual passions. He suggests a life without egoism.[48] In all things one Lord assumes various shapes and "God sporteth in all hearts." "He belongeth to him who loveth him."[49] God's grace, he feels, can save man from evil passions.[50] He claims to be enlightened and a courier of God, but not God.[51] Despite his somewhat pantheistic utterances, he is a devoted monotheist. The supreme state, he feels, is reached by association with the saints. Ravidass's teachings and life were of the individual devotional type. They neither suggest nor indicate any organisational involvement in the affairs of man. By the classification we have assumed, both Tukaram and Ravidass are mystics of Rest.

General

We have considered the lives and utterances of a few mystics of the Radical Bhakti School. The most prominent of them is Kabir whose views have tried to portray as could be gleaned from his hymns and other relevant material. All these mystics are, in their beliefs, radically different from the Vaisnava saints. For them their mystic experience is the final authority rather than the *Vedas* or any other scripture. In fact, most of the saints of this group were not well-read persons. Many of them belonged to the lower castes. But, they were all monotheists, despite monistic or pantheistic similes some of them used. Their method of mystic achievement was through the pure-hearted love of God, shorn of all formalism and external modes of worship. The goal of their life was a loving

and blissful union with God. Almost all of them in their hymns claim to have achieved such a union. Seen in the terms of our classification, their's is mysticism of Rest, or what may be called a Semi-active mysticism. Unlike the prophetic mystics, with the mystics of Rest or Union, their love of God is not yet transformed into God's love of man. With these mystics, the goal is only a union with God, without any active life of social concern. They remain out of the social field both before and after their mystic achievement. We have to accept, as a historical fact, the general non-participation of all these mystics in the social life of their times.

This issue of socio-political responsibility needs some amplification, since it is very relevant to our discussion and forms a fundamentally distinguishing feature between a mysticism of Rest and a mysticism of Activity. We find that Kabir and other saints of this Bhakti school, while they are radically different from the Vaisnava and Saiva saints, are equally distinct from the Sikh Gurus in this respect. In fact, from the overall point of view, the gap between Sikh mysticism and the Radical School is greater than the one between the latter and the Vaisnava saints. On the issue of the reality of the world and the value of moral activity as the basis of spiritual growth, the views of many of the mystics of the radical group are ambiguous and even ambivalent in some cases. Apart from the view of the four saints referred to above, the lives and utterances of saints like Pipa, Trilochan, Dhana, Jaidev, Sadhna and Surdas also show no social involvement in the moral affairs of man. In fact the last named of these saints went even to the extent of spending the later period of his life in contemplation in a forest tract.

Ray has made a close study of this sociological issue, i.e., of the difference between the Sikh Gurus and mystic saints. We shall cite him extensively and give below his assessment of the matter and his conclusions. Regarding the milieu in which Sikhism appeared he writes : "This grip (of *Smarta Pauranik* Brahamanism with its *Jati* rigour) was once more so universal that nowhere in India except in Sikhism and Sikh society was there any sect, cult or group of any description that could initiate or carry on any movement of any dimension with the spirit and objective of social criticism and protest. The *Sahajiya* Vaisnava tradition, the Sant tradition, the tradition of *Auls*, *Bauls* and *Dervishes*, etc., continued to survive, more in form than in spirit, but their zeal of fervour had gone out."[52] About the social significance and aims of the Sikh Gurus, and the lack of them in the Vaisnava and Bhakti movement,

he says, "But it is significant that while one comes across in this sacred book (*Guru Granth*) more than one citation from Jayadeva's *Gita Gobindam*, a piece of poetry which had come to be regarded as a source of religious and spiritual inspiration in the medieval Bhakti tradition of north-Indian Vaisnavism, one does not find a single citation from Sri Chaitanya, Tulsidas or Mirabai. The significance of this positive and negative evidence should not be missed, to my mind. It is in this choice that lies the historical and social significance of Sikhism and Sikh society. To steer clear of the esoterism and mysticism of austerities, self mortification, and the general negativism of such cults and sects as those of Jain *Sanyasis*, of *Nath panthis*, *Aghora panthis*, *Kapalikas* and other kindred sects on the one hand, and of the orders of the emotionally oriented and surcharged Vaisnavas of the Bhakti movement surrendering abjectly and absolutely as much to the Personal God as to the established social order, was not a very easy task in the context of the time and the space we are speaking of. But this is exactly what the Sikh Gurus seem to have been aiming at, and evidence at our disposal leaves no room for doubt that they succeeded to a very large extent in doing so."[53] Regarding the lack of organisational interest among saints or gurus of the Bhakti movement, he opines, "But there is no evidence to suggest that the gurus themselves made any conscious attempt to form a distinct community out of their Bhaktas, organise or systematise what they experienced and preached for the benefit of their followers, and give their messages and community of followers, a continuity. In other words, I do not find any evidence to indicate that any of them ever attempted to institutionalise their faith and followers, which seems to suggest that they had no other social purpose in view than to make better individuals from out of the groups that assembled around them. Their aim seems to have been the individual, not the society in any significant sense."[54] He adds, "Neither the leaders of the Bhakti movement, nor of the *Nath Panthis* and the Sant Synthesis attempted to do what Guru Nanak did, not in any systematic manner at any rate. These leaders seem to have been individuals working out for their own problems and towards achieving their personal religious and spiritual aims and aspirations."[55] As Against it, about Sikhism he writes, "Guru Nanak succeeded in what he did, because he had a clear social purpose in view and adopted ways and means to work the purpose out effectively and well. That he wanted his faith, and the discipline he had evolved for the purpose, to continue, is proved by the fact

that, before he died, he nominated a guru to take his place as his spiritual successor, one who was not his son."[56] Again he says, "He (Guru Nanak) gave them after many centuries a system of ideas, images and symbols and a set of discipline all in precise and clear terms and in a very coherent and consistent manner."[57]

Ray enumerates a number of organisational steps taken by the Sikh Gurus. The institution of the appointment of a successor started by Guru Nanak ensured the further execution of his message and mission. This step was followed by the authentication of the scripture by Guru Arjun. Finally, Guru Gobind Singh permanently institutionalised the system by the creation of the *Khalsa*, a people wedded to the Guru's mission, and making *Guru Granth* as their Guru. About the Guru's sense of social responsibility, he writes, "Indeed, positively, he (Guru Nanak) wanted his followers to lead a worldly life, the normal life of a householder recognizing one's duties and obligations to his parents, wife, children, relatives and kinsmen as much as to the larger society to which he belonged, and yet at the same time remaining faithful to his faith and its discipline. The social aim and purpose of Guru Nanak is thus very clear : to this aim and purpose, the Sikh Gurus remained steadfast to the end."[58] Guru Nanak not only rejected the many sectarian beliefs and practices of the Hindus and Muslims, "but much more than just mere rejection, Guru Nanak and his successors again and again held these up to ridicule and criticized them sharply and incisively, and by so doing they were successful in keeping alive throughout an attitude of social criticism and protest. In this connection I feel tempted to refer to Guru Nanak's sitting aside the claim of his son, Sri Chand, since he had exhibited ascetic tendencies, and Guru Amar Das's act of drawing away of the Sikhs from the *Udasis*, a sect founded by Sri Chand. One may also refer to the crusade that Guru Amar Das waged against the barbarous custom of *Sati*, and Guru Arjan's campaign in favour of widow-re-marriage, to cite only two instances."[59]

We have heard of renunciation or a monastic life being a prerequisite for mystic training. We have also heard of marriage, as in the case of Sufis, being allowed to persons under spiritual training. But, in the entire history of mystic and religious life, we have never heard of a normal house-holder's life being made essential for the mystic training, and Udasis and ascetics being excluded, as was done by the Sikh Gurus. Moral worldliness or service in the world was deemed essential and other-worldliness a hindrance to the spiritual growth. This difference has an

enormous ideological significance which has been missed by most of the students of religion and history. On the positive side, the primary emphasis is on the service of man or moral conduct as a means of spiritual progress. Here is a distinct spirit of socio-political reform and protest. All socio-political abuses were noted and condemned, including the cruelty of the rulers and the corruption of the administration. There was a keen concern for the miseries of the people. On this issue Ray writes, "Any student of Sikhism and Sikh society cannot fail to notice how the Sikh Gurus, especially Guru Nanak, Guru Arjun and Guru Gobind Singh, were very sensitively awake to and critical of not only the social but also the political abuses and consequent miseries of the people, which is another aspect of their attitude of social criticism and protest." "This sharp social consciousness characterised many of the Gurus, especially Guru Arjun and Guru Gobind Singh. Their concern for the lowliest and the lost, the human appeal of their religious aspirations, their regard for honest manual labour for earning one's livelihood and their intense dislike of parasitic existence, their unceasing and prayerful concern for a clean and honest life, marked by fearlessness on the one hand and protestant attitude towards all kinds of sham and shibboleth in religion, society and politics on the other, marked their *sishyas* out as a community distinct from the two other major communities, the Hindus and the Muslims." "But what is more important to take note of is that in several matters, for instance, in respect of marriage customs and rituals, death rites, pilgrimages, etc., they rejected the elaborate priestly customs, rites and rituals of the Brahmanical Hindus and replaced them by much simpler and much less costlier rituals. The process, started already with Guru Nanak, was continued by Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjun and Guru Gobind Singh. The Gurus also founded new centres of their faith and its followers, which soon became new centres of worship destined to replace the traditional pilgrimage centres of the Hindus. It is difficult to believe that there was no conscious and deliberate attempt to build up the Sikh community as a distinct and different one from that of the Hindus."[60] The Sikhs were given distinct symbols. They 'presumably designed to make all Sikhs look alike and distinct from the Hindus and Muslims.' This had also profound symbolical significance.[61]

It is in the above context that comparing the role of Sikh Gurus with that of the Bhakti saints of the earlier and contemporary periods that Ray concludes, "At the essential core Guru Nanak was

certainly a man of God, but he was at the same time a total man, a good husband, a good father, a good householder working with his hand to earn his bread, and many other things besides. He was, we have seen, a man of deep and sharp socio-political consciousness, wide awake of what was happening in the world around him, and constantly applying his mind to the facts, situations and problems of the time and place he belonged to." "Sikh identification of God, Guru and the Granth into one unity, as Guru Gobind Singh did, his building up of a State within a State, etc., are all parts of a piece. That piece is that of the total response of a community of people to the confrontation with Islam and Indo Muslim Society."[62] We do not believe it was a confrontation with Islam, but it was a confrontation with evil in whichever sector of the society it appeared. It was a complete response to the totality of the environmental situation by a whole man born out of his mystic urge and direction.

These and related ideological aspects will be considered separately. Here it is enough to record that there is no historical evidence that the mystics of the Radical School made any attempt to remould, reorganise any aspect of life, religious or social, or showed any significant concern for or interest in society as a whole, or in re-shaping the destiny of man. Their concern for life was as much as that of the Sufi saints. Many of them led a solitary and somewhat an other-worldly life though some of them, like the Sufis, did remain in touch with their disciples and advised and influenced them. True, they did not cut themselves off completely from life, but there was a clear dissociation from the main course and current of social life. On this aspect of the lives of these saints, Ray writes, "Religious and spiritual leaders were themselves other-worldly in attitude and outlook; they lived more often than not away from worldly life and they were never tired of repeating that temporal life was inconsistent with the religious and spiritual life. When Guru Nanak emerged on the scene of Indian history, the atmospheric background of one who felt irresistibly drawn to a religious and spiritual life, was very much like what I have just said. The leaders of the Bhakti and Sant movements, more of the latter did not subscribe to this negative view of life; they were even critical of it and denounced the giving up of worldly life and its duties and obligations. But in their actual living and pattern of social behaviour they breathed an air of mystical other-worldliness, somewhat detached from the pulls and pressures of day-to-day life. What little we know of the life, teachings and activities of a *sant*

like Kabir goes only to confirm this assumption. The *Nathapanthis*, despite their sharp criticism of ***Sanyasa***, of penances and austerities, of celibacy, of all external forms, symbols, etc., went a step further in rearing up an atmosphere of other-worldliness since they themselves in their day-to-day life and behaviour pattern, led a very mystical and esoteric way of life and occupied a position not as an integral unit of the society but on its fringes only and somewhat in enforced isolation because of their mystic and esoteric ways of life."[63]

As against it, this is what he writes about the mission of the Gurus : "Guru Nanak's genius lay in the fact that he tore himself away from this atmosphere of negation and declared himself positively in favour of worldly life, of acceptance of the duties and obligations of the human individual to the temporal and the material and at the same time of equal acceptance of the duties and obligations of religious discipline and spiritual quest for the Ultimate." "To be able to achieve the integration of temporal and spiritual seems to me to have been the most significant contribution of Guru Nanak to the totality of the Indian way of life of medieval India. Indeed, he seems to have reared up a new image of a socio-religious community given at once to temporal and spiritual pursuits of life." "By giving positive recognition to the demands, duties and obligations of secular life, in other words, of the temporal world, Guru Nanak also recognised, if not in so many words, by implication at any rate, that human society was the centre of all moral and creative efforts of social men and women. Admittedly, the ultimate end of man's religious discipline and spiritual quest was the mystical union of his individual self with the Universal Self; but the discipline that led to such an experience had wide and deep social implications. Guru Nanak described this world as a *Dharamsal*, an abode of righteousness; in other words, he believed in a basic ethical foundation of the social order of a given time and space. This social order that the great Guru was speaking of, was not the social order of either the Hindus or Muslims, or of any other socio-religious community. From the tenor of all his utterances on this theme, it is not difficult to perceive that he was referring to the entire human society. His criticism of Brahmanical Hinduism or Islam, or Jainism or of *Nathapanthi* yoga, was not so much directed towards these religions or religious cults as against the behavioural pattern of the followers of the respective faiths and cults, that is, against their social aspects. When he said, for instance, "This age is a drawn sword, the kings are butchers,

goodness hath taken wings and flown; in the dark night of falsehood I see not the moon of Truth anywhere" he was not referring to any particular individual or socio-religious group but to the contemporary social situation around him. Guru Amar Das made the point very clear when he said : "When 'sadhus' speak about a particular person, the moral is verily for the entire humanity." "The message consisted in the recognition and acceptance of one and only one God in place of hundreds of gods and goddesses. He also told them that this God could be reached not through the intermediary of priests but by one's own honest efforts, through love and devotion and through God's grace, by following a rigorous course of discipline. He gave them a prayer and a routine as keys to this disciplined way of life and the life of a householder given to practical activity in matters of the world as much as in the matters of the spirit. The mission consisted in rejecting all external forms and practices of religious and spiritual exercises, meaningless rites and rituals, base and degrading social abuses and practices. Positively, it also consisted in the acceptance of the dignity of manual labour, and the social duty of making no distinction between the rich and the poor and of fighting the forces of evil. Here was a simple and straightforward message and mission easy to understand and worthwhile following in practice and holding up as an ideal. That this message and mission would, in the socio-religious situation that prevailed in northern India during those centuries, increasingly draw more and more people within its folds, is not difficult to understand. That the charisma of personalities like Guru Nanak, Guru Arjun, Guru Hargobind, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh would also attract more and more people around them, especially against the background of systematic persecution of the Hindus by Muslim ruling authorities after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur, is also easily understandable. But what held these countless number of people together was neither the message by itself nor the mission by itself, not even by the two operating together. It was, to my mind, the institutionalisation of both, and the organisation that was built up stage by stage by the Gurus, one after another, an organisation well-knit and efficient enough to engage the loyalty and devotion of thousands of men and women towards effective articulation of the message and the mission and towards translation of both in terms of effective practical action. The leadership and the charisma of the Gurus served only as incentives and gave the necessary inspiration and guidance."[64]

Like Ray, Gupta, while comparing Guru Nanak's system with that of Ramanand, Kabir, Chaitanya and Gorakh Nath, records sixteen points of difference with these saints of the Bhakti movement. He opines, "Guru Nanak aimed at uplifting the individual as well as building a nation. The other Bhakti leaders laid emphasis on individual alone." "Sikhism from the very beginning concentrated on social reform." "In Sikhism renunciation of the world was prohibited, while other sects advocated it. Nanak also rejected celibacy. It was Nanak alone who founded the institution of Guruship for the spread of Bhakti movement."[65]

Here another relevant issue needs clarification. A point could be raised that as the saints of the Radical School were monotheistic mystics of love (and this fact is recognized by the Sikh Gurus in so far as some of their hymns stand incorporated in the *Guru Granth*), their mysticism and their message could not be different from that of the Sikh Gurus. Continuing this line of argument, it could be asserted that the reasons for the evidently wide differences in their messages and their socio-political, moral and spiritual approaches should be traced not to the mystic systems of the two groups but to causes and areas other than the mystical field. Let us examine this argument. Assuming for argument's sake, the validity of this rationale, what could be the factors leading to the widely variant socio-political messages and performance of the two groups. On the assumption of the identity of the mystic theses of the two groups, the causes of differences could only be external and just two. Firstly, these differences could be due to variations in the environmental situation and its needs, and, secondly, these could be realted to the environmental resistance at the place of activity of the two groups. If the causes have to be found outside the system itself, there could not be a third ground to explain the undeniably large divergences in the messages and the socio-political outlook of the concerned mystics.

As to the first argument about environmental demands, we find that the needs of the environmental situation for social reform and political action were far greater in the areas of north and west where the saints of the Radical School appeared than in the Punjab. Both in the matter of the rigour of Brahamanism and the sufferance caused by it, the areas around Benaras were the worst victims of orthodoxy, its hierarchical caste structure and untouchability. Similarly, these were exactly the areas where the onslaughts of the oppressive rulers were the greatest. And, these are just the areas where saints like Kabir and Ravidass appeared and preached their

messages without any inclination to enter the socio-political field. In Maharashtra too the position on these scores was worse than in the Punjab. In any case, the needs of the environmental situation could not be very pressing in the Punjab, where the hold of orthodoxy was weak and the Muslim tyranny not comparatively rapacious. Next is the question of the environmental resistance. There is no evidence to suggest that saints like Kabir, Tukaram, Namdev and others tried the course of socio-political reform and activity but dropped it because of local apathy, resistance and lack of response. Nor can it be said that Punjab was more distant from the seats and centres of Muslim power and ascendancy than Maharashtra, Benaras and Rajasthan, which were the areas where most of the saints of the Radical School lived and worked. If it were purely a question of organising political resistance, no people and place could be more appropriate than the Rajput areas of Rajputana where political resistance always remained, to an extent, simmering and dormant only to be awakened by a thoughtful leader. Nor could it be said that for the organisation of political resistance. Punjab, which was wedged between the *Subas* of Lahore and Sirhind, which lay on the paths of invasions from the North-West to Delhi, was a more suitable place, because of its past traditions, history and location, than Benaras, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

We, therefore, find that the argument about environmental differences is hardly tenable. If the seed be of the same species and variety, it would not bear a different fruit, howsoever stunted be the growth of the plant and howsoever variant and harsh be the impact of environmental and ecological conditions. If the messages were the same, those could not produce sharp divergences in reactions and the value systems among the people to whom those were addressed. And, it would be monstrous to suggest that, though the messages were the same, the Bhaktas of the Radical School were not serious enough to implement by conduct and deed their own utterances or to make necessary sacrifices for their mission.

Hence the conclusion is plain. In the case of Kabir and other saints of the Radical Bhakti movement, the goal is blissful mystic union with God. The message which the system conveyed is for the few who are ripe enough for the final climb to the summit. From this height there is no return to life and society at large. From whatever point of view we look at the issue, we inevitably come to the conclusion that the admittedly great differences in the messages and performances of the two mystic systems is not due

to any external, historical or environmental factors, but those flow from basic differences in methods, goals and the final spiritual experiences in the two cases.

(A comparative account of Radical Bhaktas may be seen in 'The Sikh Ideology' by Daljeet Singh.)

12

Modern Hindu Mysticism

Before we close our consideration of different religious or mystic developments, we shall make a brief statement about some of the recent mystic growths in India. In modern times, too, there have been Hindu mystics. Our object is to ascertain what is the kind of their mysticism, and to find out if it has a close resemblance with any of the Indian mystic systems we have described earlier. This consideration will also clarify the position as to whether or not Indian mysticism has maintained its original characteristics and continued as an independent mystic system. We shall deal with only a few of these developments that are representative of modern Hindu mysticism.

To the Western observers the mysticism of Sri Aurobindo is quite well known. No doubt compared to the Vedantic view, his mysticism has some new features. Like Suzuki, he has somewhat a dynamic view of Reality. "Those who have thus possessed the calm within can perceive always welling out from its silence the perennial supply of the energy which works in the universe."[1] This indicates that Reality is not only active but is the source of all activity in the world. It gives Brahman a more than transcendental role. Suzuki suggests the same as regards Buddhism. Sri Aurobindo is aware of the change his experience and views involve. He calls his system as the 'integral Yoga' or the 'Life divine'. His mission has been mentioned as an attempt to bring about, for the benefit of man, the descent of the supramental to our world. It was in the sixties, long after the death of Sri Aurobindo, that we visited his *Ashram* at Pondicherry. The inmates of his *Ashram* were engaged in every kind of activity, including farming, construction of building, machine and paper making, printing, etc. All activities, excepting a few, were permitted. Anyone joining as an inmate of the *Ashram* had to accept three limitations. He could not keep private property. Though husband and wife could live at the *Ashram*, they were not supposed to have children. It involved a

virtual vow of celibacy. To a young seeker Sri Aurobindo wrote. "If your ideal is spiritual life, you must think fifty times before you marry."[2] The inmates, and for that matter even the *Ashram*, could not partake in any political activity. In fact, in the later part of his life, he went into seclusion, except on three days in a year when he presented himself only for Darshan and for receiving obeisance from his devotees.[3] These features present a contrast with the principles of prophetic mysticism. Though there is a visible departure from some of the tenets of Upanisadic mysticism, Sri Aurobindo's mysticism does not cover the totality of life. The responsibilities of the political and the family life are excluded. Sri Aurobindo accepts the mystic tradition of *Upanisads* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Obviously, his is not a mysticism of the active kind. There is not complete withdrawl from life, but the limitations imposed on the inmates of the *Ashram* bring his mysticism in between the monasticism of the Upanisadic hermits and the semi-active mysticism of the Radical Bhakti School.

Swami Sivananda presents another view.[4] It is based on the experiences of many modern Hindu mystics. It appears that these mystics belong to the Upanisadic tradition. For, their emphasis is on *Jnana* Yoga and general renunciation of the world. The goal is to be part and parcel of Brahman, by losing all feeling and knowledge of self-identity. Like Sankara, duality between man and God is considered a lower stage of mystic development. This stage has to be transcended in order to reach the highest mystic state.

According to this view, there are seven stages (*Bhumikas*) in the mystic progress, "(1) *Subhechcha* : When one feels that he is in ignorance and sincerely wishes to acquire spiritual knowledge, he is in *Subhechcha*. (2) *Vichara* : When one is convinced of the worthlessness of the world, and deeply ponders over the method of destroying ignorance and attaining spiritual knowledge, he is said to be in *Vichara*. (3) *Tanumanasi* : When the mind becomes thin like a thread due to distaste for objects of the world and is intensely engrossed in the contemplation of the Soul, he is in *Tanumanasi*. (4) *Sattvapatti* : When the mind becomes pure (*Sattvic*) and is established in the Self due to prolonged contemplation, he is said to be in *Sattvapatti*. (5) *Asamsakti* : When one becomes completely detached from the objective world due to the knowledge of the Self, he is in *Asamsakti*. (6) *Padartha Bhavana* : When one realises that things of the world are not really material things but only the One Brahman, he is said to be in *Padartha-Bhavana*. (7) *Turiya* : When one completely negates the

manifold distinctions of the world and realises the Undivided (*Akhanda*), One Essence (*Ekarasa*), *Satchitananda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss), he is said to be in *Turiya*. This state of *Turiya* is called the state of *Jivanmukti* or liberation, while in life."[5]

There are four kinds of *Jnanis*, *Brahmavid*, *Brahma-vara*, *Brahmavid-Variyan* and *Brahmavid-Varishtha*. *Brahmavid* is one who has reached the fourth stage of mystic development. The one at the fifth stage of mystic development is called *Brahmavid-Vara*. The last two kinds of *Jnanis* are, respectively, at the sixth and seventh stages of mystic achievement. The first two kinds (A *Vid* and a *Vara*) have "very slight consciousness of the body in the form of a mental retention or *Samakara*. A *Vid* and a *Vara* can work in the world. Some people imitate the state of an *Avadhuta* and throw away the clothes. A real *Avadhuta* is absolutely nude. As he is always established in Brahman, he forgets the body and surroundings, and the cloth drops by itself as the cloth drops in the case of a drunkard."[6] Vamadeva, Jada Bharata, Akalkot Swami and Mowni Swami were all *Jnanis* of the third and the fourth kinds. They were perfect *Avadhutas*. Food had virtually to be forced down their throats. "They were absolutely unconscious of the body and their surroundings."[7] "A *Jnani* of absolute seventh *Bhumika*, who has not even a bit of consciousness cannot live for more than 14 days (from 2 to 3 to 14 days.)"[8] "One School of thought says that knowledge of Brahman dawns in the fourth *Bhumika*. Another school of thought says that the real highest knowledge of Brahman can be had only in the seventh *Bhumika* and the fourth, fifth and sixth are stages only."[9] Obviously, a *Jnani* of the first or the second kind has to give up all activity before he can achieve the higher stages of mystic experience. The last two kinds of *Jnanis* are also called *Samadhi-Jnanis*, they being non-active. As against that, the first two categories of *Jnanis*, who are semi-conscious and can work in life, are called *Vyavahara Jnanis*. The desire of the *Vyavahara Jnanis* to work in the world is due to their *Prarabdha*.

Kalkot Swami and Mowni Swami "were unconscious of the movement of their bowels and the *Sevakas* (attendants) had to wash their bottoms."[10] To such third and fourth kinds of *Jnanis*, all perceptions of objects, external and internal, are lost (*Adhava Pratiti*)". The last stage *Jnani* is also called a *Videha Mukta*. He, "whose individuality is absolutely merged in Brahman, cannot have the awareness of the world, which is non-existent to him. If his body is to be maintained, it has to be fed and cared for by others. The *Videhamukta* is thus not in a position to engage himself for

the good of the world."[11]

The mystic experiences of the highest *Jnani* have been recorded as follows : "The world appears like a mirage within me. It is an illusion. I am spaceless and timeless. I am infinite, imperishable, self-luminous, self-existent. I am beginningless. I am deathless. I am endless. I am birthless. I am pure. I am the limitless, infinite ocean of consciousness. I am taintless *Nirvana*. I am Supreme Peace, Transcendental, I am Freedom Absolute. Never was I born. I am Atman. I am Absolute."[12] This is an experience analogous to what Sankara has mentioned in his morning *Mantras*. But, this is quite a contrast with the words of a prophetic mystics like, Christ, Mohammad and the Sikh Gurus. Humility and love are the dominant note of their sayings and hymns.

To the *Jnani*, the world appears a dream and unreal. Like the Buddhists, it has been argued that "change is the characteristic of all perceived objects. Change implies non-existence at the beginning and also at the end. That which does not exist at the beginning and does not exist at the end, does not exist in the middle also. Therefore, waking is unreal like dream."[13] Self realisation breaks the chain of causation, and consequently the world of experience appears false.[14] *Moksha* according to this view "is to be Oneself, is to be the All. Self-consciousness is the characteristic of *Ishvara* and not of Brahman. "Brahman does not know, for It is knowledge."[15]

It is believed that *Ishvara* is lower than Brahman. *Ishvara* is a person. And a person, even the absolute person (*Ishvara*) is non-eternal.[16] "Truth is the union of the cosmic thinker and the cosmic thinking." "It is that which is. It is not love, nor grace, nor soul, nor God, nor light; for all these are relative conceptions." "Reality is beyond *Satchitananda* also. It transcends cosmic consciousness. One who knows Brahman reaches the Highest. One becomes Immortal. He does not return."[17]

The final stage or *Moksha* is reached in two ways. One is the immediate experience of Brahman, the spaceless and timeless One. This stage is called *Sadyomukti*. It puts an end to the relative notions of *Ishvara*, *Jiva* and *Jagat*. "It is at once being Brahman."[18] This way *Moksha* is reached immediately. One who reaches the Absolute through knowledge never returns. In the second way, *Moksha* is attained gradually and by stages. The lord of the world is the Absolute Individual. These *Jnanis* do not reach the highest liberation (*Moksha*) in this life. After death, they live in *Brahmloka*, the world of God. It is a spontaneous life just as that of God. But

this is not the state of the highest liberation. For they do not merge in Brahman. They have all the powers except those of creation, preservation and destruction. These *Jnanis* or souls are different from *Ishvara*. Despite their knowledge, they have not yet attained the final liberation, which means an end to all relative knowledge and existence. For the highest *Jnani* the world does not exist even as a remembrance. He has no relative knowledge, not even the knowledge of God, for that too is relative knowledge. The souls that have yet to achieve the final liberation are free within their scope, but they are not omniscient and omnipotent. These souls attain Absolute Experience only when the universe ends. They cannot experience Absoluteness as long as *Ishvara* exists as a Self-conscious Being, which means that they are still having an objective experience and are different from *Ishvara*. Otherwise there is no reason why they should retain their individual entities uptil the end of the universe. "All those who meditate upon the Absolute Individual (God) through positive qualitative conceptions rest in the Absolute Individual, who, in the end of time, ending the space-time universe which is His own Body, dissolves Himself in the conscious power of the Absolute, which is non-different from the Absolute. These relatively liberated ones have their individualities not destroyed here but exist in the world of the Absolute Individual, i.e., the Absolute Individual is experienced by them not directly but as an objective conscious universe. This Self Dissolution of God, is in some respects, similar to the deep sleep of the worldly individual who also, in the end of the day, ending his body-consciousness, dissolves himself in the unconscious power based on the Atma, which is superimposed on the Atma. But the difference between the two dissolutions, however, is in the fact that in the case of God there is no further forced coming back to Universe consciousness, no subsequent dreaming and wakings state, and there is Absolute Experience; whereas, in the case of the worldly individual, there is forced coming back to body consciousness, there is subsequent dreaming and waking state, and there is no Self-experience."[19] These (semi-liberated) souls have an individuality. And all individuality implies relative knowledge and consequent lack of omniscience and omnipotence. A *Jivanmukta* of this kind "goes round laughing, sporting, enjoying with women and chariots and friends, not remembering the appendage of the body."[20] He may do mysterious and ununderstanding activities. Though he has no consciousness of his body, yet he is "made to animate his body through a slight trace

of the existent pure egoism unconnected with consciousness. This is, in other words, the remainder of that part of his *Prarabdha Karma* which is unobstructive to Knowledge. The state of *Jivanmukta* has no connection with the physical body; it is a state of consciousness, it can be experienced even when the physical body is dropped, i.e., even in *Brahmloka*. The *Jivanmukta* of this physical world, with his physical body, too, is really in *Brahmaloka* in his consciousness, though the body is in this world. Those who have not attained *Jivanmukti* here and are not ready for *Sadyo Mukti* immediately after the *Prana* stops functioning in the present physical body, attain this through *Karma Mukti* after the death of the physical body. This shows that a *Videhamukta* is not one who exists in *Brahmaloka* but who has merged in the Absolute.[21]

The souls in *Brahmaloka* cannot have a simultaneous experience of the entire existence which is possible only in the Absolute. There is no doubt "that even the least wish or action however much universal it may be, means a state below the most exalted Supreme Being. It is clear that all the various statements regarding the different experiences, which the liberated soul is said to have, must refer to an objective experience in one or the other of the three stages of *Virat, Hiranyagarbha* and *Ishvara*."[22] These souls are yet on the way to the final liberation or *Karma Moksha*. They attain liberation through the long process of *Brahmaloka*. These souls live there as individuals. They are governed by their *Prarabdha*. Such souls continue at a lower level of development, till they attain the final liberation. This happens when God ends the world of space and time and dissolves Himself finally into Brahman, the Absolute. Those who believe in a God of attributes and personality get liberation through this slow process. This happens when the world of space and time is wound up.

Swami Krishnananda states that the main mystic stages are four only : "Attainment of (1) universal objective multiplicity consciousness, (2) universal subjective multiplicity consciousness, (3) universal self-consciousness, (4) transcendental experience. (The first three experiences are relative and seem to be existent only so long as one exists as an individualised experiencer. There cannot be any logical proof for the existence of these three objective states beyond and individualistic demand."[24] A later Vedanta says, "Those dull-witted persons who are unable to realise the unconditioned Supreme Brahman are shown compassion through the description of the qualified Brahman. When their mind is controlled through meditation on the qualified Brahman, the

One free from all limitations reveals Itself."[23]

It is evident that these modern mystics represents the Vedantic view of mysticism. This view of Indian mysticism, based on the Upanisadic texts, holds supreme even till today. This mysticism is out and out quietist. In this system, moral activity on the part of the mystic indicates a lower level of development. The highest mystic stage involves complete withdrawal from the world and merger in Brahman. It means the loss of all sense of individuality. It is typically the Upanisadic mysticism of Merger. It confirms our view that mystic growths are always independent of environmental factors. Despite the lapse of numerous centuries, Upanisadic mysticism has remained entirely unaffected by the historical influences. The experiences of these modern mystics are the same as of the sages over two millennia earlier.

PART TWO

13

The Idea of God

Having made a brief survey of the major religions of the world, we now come to the main part of the our subject, viz., Sikhism. Here we shall base our views on the hymns of the Gurus. These were collected, compiled and authenticated by the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev himself, in the form of the Adi Granth. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, added to this volume the hymns of the ninth Guru. It is to this authenticated compilation that he later gave the status of the Guru. Since then it forms the *Guru Granth*, the most revered and authenticated scripture in the world.

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of Sikhism we shall, apart from answering the seven questions we have posed earlier, deal with all aspects of its world-view and its theological concepts, including those about Reality, the place and role of man in the universe, ethics and the moral life, and the human goal. While we shall deal with these issues separately, here it may just be mentioned that the Sikh Gurus are uncompromising monotheists. In the very opening line of the *Guru Granth*, the *Mool Mantra*, God is described by Guru Nanak as "By the Grace of the Sole One, Self-existent and Immanent, the Creator Person, without Fear or Unconditioned, Without enmity or Un-contradicted, the Timeless One, Un-incarnated, Self-created and Enlightener."[1] God is never born, nor changes. The becoming world is His creation, not his emanation, nor is it identical with Him.

It would be very pertinent first to indicate, briefly, the kind of God that is envisaged in Sikhism. That would clarify not only the metaphysical position, but also some of its theological concepts and other issues. In their hymns, the Gurus describe God in numerous ways, referring to many of His social, political, aesthetic, metaphysical, ethical and other attributes. But there are seven significant aspects of God which need particular mention. These will explain the concept of God in Sikhism. It is essential to understand these aspects, because they have a far-reaching

consequence in governing the life of the Sikh mystic and in determining the significance, origin and course of Sikh institutions and practices.

Creator

God is the Creator. The universe is His creation. The very concept of a Creator-God implies the universe as the creation of God. It is not a part of Him. The universe is in time and space. It is changing and becoming. The Creator is different from the creation which is limited and conditioned. God is uncreated and unlimited. He is not the material cause of the universe. But, no independent Prakriti is assumed. He creates everything.

The universe is not illusory or unreal. But, as God is Limitless and Omnipresent, so is the creation in God but not God. "God created the world of life, planted *Naam* (Immanent God) therein and made it the seat of righteousness."[2] "God created the world and permeated it with His Light." "The Self-Existent God manifested Himself as *Naam*."[3] "He creates all, fills all, and is yet separate."[4] There are many hymns in the *Guru Granth* which mention that God was there even before He created the Universe, He being Transcendent. He Himself started the creation. "He is the Sole-Creator. There is no second one."[5] "God was by Himself and there was nothing else." "There was no love or devotion. Nor was His creative power in operation."[6] During a discussion, the Yogis asked Guru Nanak a question, "When there was no form nor sign, where was the Word (*Sabad* or Logos)" and "how was the Word attuned with Truth ?" The Guru replied, "When there was no form, no sign, no unit of life, the Word in its Essence was in the Transcendent God; when there was no earth, no sky (Time and space), the Lord permeated everything. All distinctions, all forms, were then inherent in the Wonderous Word. No one is pure without Truth. Ineffable is this gospel."[7]

The Gurus say that before God created form, He was all by Himself; before He was Immanent, He was Transcendent only; and yet all immanence, expression, creativity, were inherent in Him and so was His Word. "In the region of Truth, God creates perpetually, watches His Creation with a Benevolent eye." "He is happy about it, and deliberates over it, directing it with His will."[8] It means God is Ever-Creative. He has been called Ever-New, Ever-Fresh and Blooming (*Nit-Naveen Navtan*).

The above quotations from the *Guru Granth* give a clear idea of the creative activity of God and the cosmological aspect of His

Creation which is distinct from Him.

TRANSCENDENT AND IMMANENT

God is both Transcendent and Immanent. He is both in the universe and outside it. The Self-created or Transcendent God was always there.

Transcendent

While time and space, force and change are the aspects of the becoming universe, God is Eternal, Self-existent. He cannot be conceived or explained in empirical terms. His Limitlessness and Timelessness cannot be understood in terms of space and temporal time. He is beyond space and beyond time. The first Guru describes the state of God when there was no universe of time and space. It only shows God's transcendent character. In the *Sidh Gost*, in answer to a question as to where the Transcendent God was before the stage of creation, Guru Nanak replied, "To think of the Transcendent Lord in that state is to enter the realm of wonder. Even at that stage of *Sunn* (void), He permeated that Void."[9] The Guru, in effect, means that to matters that are beyond the spacio-temporal world, it would be wrong to apply the spacio-temporal logic, and yet man knows of no other logic or language. Perforce, every subject has to be explained to him, howsoever inadequately or symbolically, only in terms of that language. That is why the Gurus have cautioned us against the pitfalls and inadequacy of human logic to comprehend the Timeless One. He is Entirely Different. All the same, the fifth Guru has mentioned the state when the Transcendent God was all by Himself and there was no creation. "When there was no form in sight, how could there be good or bad actions? When God was in the Self-Absorbed state, there could be no enmity or conflict. When God was all by Himself, there could be no attachment or misunderstanding."[10] "For millions of aeons the Timeless one was by Himself. There was no substance nor space nor time, nor day or night, no stars or galaxies; God was in His trance."[11] That state of God, it means, is to be envisaged in terms of spacelessness and timelessness. The nature of God transcends all known categories with which we describe the universe. The Creator of these limited categories cannot be judged by the yardstick of those created limitations within which we move, perceive, conceive, live and assess. The Gurus again and again describe Him as Wonderous, Infinite, Unfathomable, Unknowable,

Indescribable, Ineffable and Immeasurable by human categories of thought and perception. We can at best assess things only by our limited and relative methods and measures. We cannot completely comprehend God who is beyond us and unconditioned and unfettered by those dimensions and limits. The Guru calls Him Wonderous, the Wonder of Wonders. He is beyond description and comprehension, or 'Wholly Other' as described by Otto. "The mind alone can never know Him."[12]

Immanent

The immanent aspect of God has been variously described as His Will that directs the universe, His Word that informs the universe, and His *Naam* that not only creates the entire universe but sustains and governs it. 'God creates the universe, takes His abode in it and sustains it."[13] According to the Gurus, God creates the universe, then becomes Immanent in it, being at the same time Transcendent. "He that permeates all hearts is Transcendent too."[14] "He pervades the body and is yet detached."[15] "He is in the midst of all and is yet distinct."[16] "Having created the world, He stands in the midst of it and is separate too."[17] Thus, God is both Transcendent and Immanent. In Islam, God is supposed to be only Transcendent, even though the immanent aspect of God appears to be recognised when it is said, "God is nearer to you than your jugular vein." In Christianity, the immanent aspect of God is clearly accepted and emphasised. This Immanence of God is only a symbolic way of expressing God's connection with the world. Naturally, when the world was not there the question of His Immanence did not arise. That is why when "there was no form, the Word (Immanence) in essence abided in the Transcendent God."[18]

The above statements about the Immanence of God emphasise the spiritual and meaningful character of the universe and life's capacity for relationship with God. The term Transcendent describes Him as "Wholly Other". The Immanent aspect indicates the same God's love for His creation. As in any other theism, in Sikhism the immanent aspect of God, called His *Naam*, Will and *Sabad*, is of great importance. On the one hand, it gives relevance, authenticity, direction and sanction to the entire moral and spiritual life of man and his institutions and goals. On the other hand, it emphasises God's capacity for revelation, His nearness to man and His deep and abiding interest in the world. It is almost impossible to conceive of a theistic system without the Immanence

of God. It is on the assumption of the Immanence of God that most of the theistic institutions are based. In any system where God is only Transcendent and Unapproachable, all moral and spiritual life and yearning would become pointless and irrelevant.

A few words of clarification may be added. When we say that God is both Transcendent and Immanent, it does not at all mean that there are two parts, stages or phases of God. It is the Transcendent God who is everywhere, in each heart, place and particle. It is He who is both Transcendent and Immanent. "The same God is *Sargun* and *Nirgun*, *Nirankar* and Self Absorbed."[19] *(Sunn Samadhi)* "*Sargun* and *Nirgun* are created by *Naam*."[20] He is both *Nirankar* (Formless) and *Sakar* (In Form); He is the One, both *Nirgun* and *Sargun*."[21] God is near, not far away. He is in the Creation, He is the ***Ek Omkar***. There is no other who permeates everywhere. "It is the Transcendent, the Pure, The Fearless One, who is also Immanent in the world."[22] The Gurus repeatedly emphasise that He is One and we only give Him different names. It would be highly inappropriate to confuse the Guru's concept of *Sargun* and *Nirgun* (One Transcendent-cum-Immanent God) with the Advaitic meaning of these terms or with the idea of *Ishvara*. These Advaitic concepts have distinct connotation of phases, stages or transformation. These have been clearly repudiated by the Gurus' concept of One God. Sankara deems *Ishvara* to be a lower stage of development which has to be transcended to reach the goal or Brahman. For Ramanuja God is virtually pantheistic. The world, soul and *Ishvara* are three eternal principles which constitute Brahman. The world and souls are the body and qualities of Brahman. This is an entirely different concept from that of the One Creator God of the Gurus. He is simultaneously Transcendent and Immanent. The Gurus never accept the Advaitic concepts of *Sargun* and *Nirgun*. Similarly, in the hymns of *Sachkhand*, the Guru calls the *Nirankar* as One who deliberates, creates and directs. He is Benevolent, Gracious and is delighted to see His Creation. But *Nirankar* literally means the Formless One. This word too has distinct Advaitic meanings. The hymn referred to above repudiates that concept and adds that in the *Sachkhand*, God commands endless numbers of forms, universes and regions.

By the above two examples, we wish to convey that it would be extremely erroneous and misleading to introduce old Indian or Advaitic concepts and meanings while interpreting the terms employed by the Gurus. In their hymns, they have made every term and concept used by them unambiguously clear. The Guru Granth

is the best authority for understanding the meanings of the concepts and terms used by the Gurus.

God of Attributes

The third aspect of God, as flowing from His Immanent character, is His being the 'Ocean of Attributes, Values and Virtues'. This aspect of God is of extreme relevance to moral life in the universe. Since all attributes are only relative, a God of Attributes indicates and lays down the standard and the ideals for which man has to work. God has been described as full of all values, as Father, Mother, Friend, Brother, Enlightener, Protector, Shelter of the shelterless, Loving, Benevolent, Beneficent, Helper of the poor and weak and Destroyer of the evil[22a] or demonical or oppressor.[22b] "My Lord is Ever fresh, New; He is always Benevolent."[23] "You are my Mother, You are my Father, You are my Protector everywhere."[24] "He relieves the sufferings of the downtrodden; He is the Succour of the succourless."[25] 'God is eyes to the blind, riches to the poor, Nanak, He is the Ocean of virtues."[26]

This attributive aspect (Immanence) of God is extremely significant. It inextricably links God with the universe. It establishes beyond doubt the character and direction of God's Will and Immanence. This leads to four important inferences. First, attributes and Values can have a place only in a becoming, relative or spacio-temporal world, since all perfection is static and all qualities are relative. A God of Attributes has, thus, a meaning only in relation to the changing world of man. Evidently, for the expression of attributes, a changing universe is essential and becomes an integral part of the plan of God. In other words, God and the universe are conjoint and inter-linked, the latter depending on the former. It is impossible to think of a God of Attributes or of His Immanence in the absence of a relative or changing world. That is why when God was by Himself, the question of 'love and devotion, of good or bad actions, or of the saved or Saviour' could not arise, there being nothing other than Him. Secondly, and this is the most important inference, virtues and attributes emphatically indicate, apart from the standard of ethical values and moral life, the direction in which human efforts should be made. These point out the purposes for which the Will of God works. Thirdly, it indicates the perpetual interest of God in man and the universe. It, in a way, gives status and authenticity to life and the universe which is decried or downgraded in many other religious or mystic traditions. In addition, there is the benevolent character of God. Not only is

He the Creator and Sustainer of life, He nurtures and develops it with a loving care. He has also been called the Enlightener (*Guru* or Guide) of man. "He rewards your efforts and acknowledges your deeds," "Life of life."[27] "God rewards all efforts to become divine."[28] "If you go one step towards God, He comes near you by ten steps."[29] This aspect of God gives a pre-eminent meaning of life. It gives optimism, hope and confidence to man in the achievement of his ideals. Man knows the direction in which he should move, and he has also the assurance that there is someone to guide and help him with love. Lastly, this aspect gives validity and spiritual sanctity to the moral and ethical life in the world. In many religious systems, moral life is deemed to be an entanglement in the world. At best, some systems accept it as the preparatory method of purity for the spiritual life to be attained. But in Sikh theology this attributive aspect of God gives spiritual character to the moral life *per se.*

God has a Will

The Gurus conceive God as a God of Will. Everything is governed by His Will. This is the burden of so many hymns in the *Guru Granth.* "Everything happens within the ambit of His Will."[30] The entire universe is created, sustained, and moved according to His Will. A God of Will naturally presupposes that He wants the universe to move not chaotically but with a Purpose. Just like the Attributes of God, God's Will too can be exercised only in a changing world and towards a goal. The very idea of a Will implies a direction and an aim. This, too, re-emphasises the same features and points as stated in regard to a God of Attributes. The direction is governed by the Attributes of God, and the Purpose, as we shall see later, is to evolve a God-centred man from a self-centred individual. This concept is central to Sikh theology. Here we add a word of explanation. A God of Will does not at all mean a deterministic world, because God is creative and all movement in life is towards a creative freedom. We shall revert to this point separately.

God does not Incarnate

In the ***MoolMantra*** God has been mentioned as one who never takes birth nor takes form. The fifth Guru says, "May that mouth burn which says that God has incarnated."[31] "God alone is the One who is not born of a woman."[32] "The Lord incarnates not."[33] "God is self-existent, without form and incarnates not."[34] The Gurus

have definitely decried belief in the theory of incarnation. In order to dispel such ideas, they have stated that He created countless Brahmas, Sivas and Vishnus. "The Formless One, alone, Nanak, is without fear; many are Ramas as the dust of His feet, and many Krishnas. Many are their stories and many are the Vedas."[35] Here, too, the idea that God never takes the human form has a distinct meaning and import. First, it shows that God is 'Wholly Other'. For a God that is Transcendent and Unknowable, the question of His taking the human form does not arise. Secondly, all pantheistic and like implications, as flowing from the idea of a God who takes the human form, have to be discarded. Besides, the concept has three other corollaries too. The first is that man can never become God. This also involves that God and men are not identical but are different. Secondly, it indicates that the aim of spiritual effort is not merger in God, as under some other systems, but to have a union or relation with Him. This has a crucial significance in determining the human goal and in showing that the entity of man is distinct from that of God. The two can never be one, though man can be in tune with Him. Thirdly, it shows *inter alia* that spiritual activity does not stop after the final achievement. The superman has a role to perform in carrying out the Will of God. Consequently, so long as the universe is there and the Will of God is in operation, the activities and duties of the superman too do not come to an end.

God of Grace

In the ***Mool Mantra***, God is called Gracious and Enlightener. A God of Will and a God of Grace have a meaning only in a becoming world wherein alone His Grace and Will can operate. Grace implies that God's Will is Free, undetermined by any outside law. In addition, it also stresses the Love and Benevolence of God towards man and the universe which are different from Him. For a Gracious Being can bestow His Grace only on something other than Himself. It has been repeatedly stressed that all final approval of man is an act of God's Grace. "O Nanak, the intellect is of no avail, one is approved only by His Grace."[36]

The Grace aspect of God also fortifies the truth of the other implications as described earlier in relation to a God of Will and Attributes. In addition, it implies that God is 'Wholly Free' and Creative. He is not governed by the empirical laws known to us. It also dispels the idea that the world is deterministic. His Activity is, therefore, incomprehensible except in terms of His Grace of Freedom.

God with Personality

The Gurus believe that God has a Personality. In fact, the heading of a couple of hymns is specifically given as "That Person" (*So Purukh*), wherein He is described, "That person is Pure, God is Fathomless and Limitless."[37] A God of Will, Freedom, Grace and Attributes, or the Creator, Controller and Director of Universe, can be conceived only in terms of a personality. The emphasis on prayer and love towards God is there in almost all the hymns of the *Guru Granth*. This can only mean that God is a Being with a Personality to whom prayer can be directed and devotion and love expressed. Evidently, this personality aspect of God is operative only in relation to the world. Nor is a God of Personality conceived in terms of the limited personality of man, who is a finite being in a becoming universe.

We have mentioned only such salient aspects and features of God as are very relevant to our discussion. We shall be greatly concerned with these ideas about God in understanding the ideological and practical implications of Sikhism. Many of its distinguishing features are deeply and directly connected with these theological concepts of God. They have a Fundamental and crucial effect in shaping and influencing the life of the Sikh and the growth and development of Sikh institutions, ethos and traditions.

NAAM

For any student of Sikh theology, it is necessary to understand the meaning and implication of the term *Naam*. Sikhism has often been called the *Naam Marga* or the way of *Naam*. Let us broadly indicate how the word *Naam* has been used in *Guru Granth*. The Sikh Gurus have given the word *Naam*, a distinct and significant meaning which is far different from that of the mere *Naam* or psychic factors as understood by *Naam-Roopa* in the traditional literature.[38] A clear doctrine about *Naam* has been laid down. The basic definition of *Naam* is contained in the *Sukhmani* and in some other quotations from the *Guru Granth* given below :

(*i*) "*Naam* sustains all regions and universes, all thought, knowledge and consciousness, all skies and stars, all forces and substances, all continents and spheres. *Naam* emancipates those who accept it in their heart. He, on whom is His Grace, is yoked to *Naam* and he reaches the highest state of development."[39]

(*ii*) "*Naam* is the Creator of everything. To be divorced from *Naam* is death."[40] All is created by *Naam*."[41] "*Naam* gives form to everything and through *Naam* comes all Wisdom or Light."[42]

(*iii*) "*Naam* extends to all creation. There is no place or space where *Naam* is not."[43]

(*iv*) "*Naam* is the 'Nine Treasures' and Nectar (*Amrit*) ; It permeates the body."[44]

(*v*) "*Naam*, the immaculate, is unfathomable, how can it be known ? *Naam* is within us, how to get to it ? It is *Naam* that works everywhere and permeates all space. The perfect Guru awakens your heart to the vision of *Naam*. It is by the Grace of God that one meets such an Enlightener."[45]

From the above verses it is clear that the Gurus do not use the word *Naam* in any restrictive sense of its being a psychic factor or mere consciousness. But they refer to it as the Highest Power, creating, informing, supporting and working the entire universe. In short, *Naam* is the Reality, supporting and directing the created worlds. There are numerous verses in the *Guru Granth* where *Naam* and God have been described synonymously. Both, *Naam* and God have been mentioned as the "Creator of the Cosmos," as "the Sustainer of the universe," as "permeating and informing all things, beings, space and interspace," as "the Treasure of virtues, values," as "the Support of the supportless," as "the Giver of peace and bliss," as "Eternal", "Perfect" and "Unfathomable" and as the "Friend", "Master" and "Emancipator" of man. The highest state of man is mentioned as the one when he lives and works in tune with God or *Naam*, often called as God's *Naam*. We, therefore, find that God and *Naam* are Real, Eternal and Unfathomable. The Gurus have repeatedly emphasised that God is one *Ek-Omkaar*, and no second entity is at all postulated. "My Lord is the only One. He is the Only One. (understand) brother, He is the only one."[46] This unambiguously brings out that God and *Naam* are one and the same. *Naam* may be called the immanent or qualitative aspect of God. Accordingly *Naam* is the Creative and Dyanamic Immanence of God, the Reality sustaining, working and directing the manifest world of force and form.

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The Metaphysical View

Few prophets have specifically tended to lay down or prove a metaphysical system. The Sikh Gurus are no exception. The Buddha spurned discussion of all metaphysical problems. Yet, no religion is without a theology of its own. Every system has some broad basic assumptions. It must, in order to guide its followers, prescribe a working philosophy and the principles of its discipline. It is on these fundamentals that the theology of a religion is raised. In their hymns, the Gurus have clarified all the principles and doctrines of their religion. We shall try to understand what is the kind of system these suggest.

"The Self-Existent God manifested himself into *Naam*. Then came the creation of the universe. He permeates it and revels in His Creation."[1] Further, it has been stated that the universe is being sustained and directed by God as *Naam*. "In the Region of Truth is God where He perpetually creates and watches the Creation with His Benevolent Eye, deliberating about it and directing it according as He Wills." This idea of God being the Sole Entity and being the Creator God (*Karta-Purakh*) is so fundamental to the Sikh theology that it is mentioned in the very opening line *(Mool Mantra)* of the *Guru Granth*, and, again, in the beginning of almost every section and subsection of it. Both the idea of God, explained in the preceeding chapter, and the *Mool Mantra* clearly point that the theology of Sikhism is monotheistic. Let us try to see whether this conclusion of ours is correct, and whether many of the hurriedly-begotten views about Sikhism being pantheistic, Vedantic, Yogic or Buddhistic have any validity. A few of the reasons supporting our conclusion are as under.

(i) In the hymns of the *Guru Granth*, the acceptance of Creature-Creator relation between man and God is the striking feature. Invariably, God has been addressed as Thou, Mother, Father, Brother, Beloved, Lord, Husband or in a like manner. In fact, a majority of the hymns in the *Guru Granth* are in the form

of prayers, all addressed to God. In the Sikh tradition, two things are firmly established, having the sanction of the Gurus. First, every prayer or ceremony, religious or social ends with an *Ardass* or supplication to God, invoking His Grace. Secondly, morning and evening prayers and the remembrance of God form an essential part of the Sikh discipline prescribed at the time of the initiation ceremony.[2] We thus, find that both in the hymns of the *Guru Granth* and the Sikh tradition and practice, this Creature-Creator relation is never forgotten. The Guru calls himself as 'the lowliest of the low.' "All that has been created by God is nobler than I, who is low and ridden with vice".[3] Extreme humility is a very significant feature of the prayer hymns addressed by the Gurus to God. Never does the Guru mention another person as 'That is Thou,' or himself as 'I am Brahman or God.' The fifth Guru declined to include in the *Guru Granth* a hymn by a contemporary saint, Bhagat Kaahna, saying, "I am He, O, I am the same"[4]; because this hymn was regarded by the Guru to be evidently contrary to the Sikh faith that man is not and can never be God, though he can be His instrument.

(ii) The arguments advanced to show the Creature-Creator relation in Sikhism and the importance of prayer, *mutatis mutandis* apply also to God having a Personality. The *Guru Granth* clearly shows that Sikhism is a religion of love. In all devotional and mystic religions, the idea of the Personality of God is inherent, since love and devotion involve two persons, God and a devotee.

In Sikhism the ideas of the Will (*Hukam, Raza*) and Grace of God in relation to the created world are as fundamental as in the other theistic religions, like Christianity and Islam. Both the words *Hukam* and *Raza* used in the *Guru Granth* are Arabic in origin. These ideas of Will and Grace are inalienably linked with the idea of the Personality of God; the Creator, who alone can have a Will and be Gracious and Free. These ideas being basic to Sikhism, they too underline its theistic character.

(iii) The verses quoted earlier mention the universe as the creation of God and not His Emanation or Extension. God is not the material cause of the world. Nor is the separate and independent existence of matter accepted in any form. The universe is changing. It is limited by space and time, and cannot be eternal like God. In Sikhism, the doctrine of incarnation (*Avatar*), or God taking the human form, is strictly denied and is considered heretical. Guru Gobind Singh described such an idea as an accursed one. He was, he said, a mere servant of God.[5] In

the hymn of *Khands* in the *Japji*, the world is limited to the Region of Creativity *(Karam Khand)*. It was initiated through the medium of energy or power *(Jor)*. In the hymns of *Saram Khand* and *Gyan Khand*, a fantastic multiplicity of forms, shapes and things, including the moulding of consciousness, sense perceptions, mind and intellect, are described. Everyone knows that in the Sikh theology the highest form of being is the mystic (*Bhagat*). In the *Japji*, the Guru distinctly mentions, or rather limits, the presence of these God-conscious or God-filled beings only upto the Region of Creativity, but never beyond it, i.e., not in the Region of Truth or God. The universe is the creation of God, but it is not identical with God. This is the basic distinction between monotheism and Indian monism or pantheism.

(iv) At a number of places in the *Guru Granth*, the Guru has described symbolically the state of God when the creation was not there. All this indicates that God is Transcendent and that He is not co-terminus with His creation. Not only does the creation not exhaust God, but He is both prior and transcendent to His creation. And, God's Transcendence, with a separate created universe, could be envisaged only under a monotheistic system and never in pantheism.

(v) An argument has been raised in favour of the supposed pantheistic character of Sikhism because of the Guru's frequent mention of the immanent character of God in the created world. The Gurus have clearly emphasised the transcendental character of God by saying that the world was created in time and space. The Transcendent God had been there even while the world was uncreated and God's immanent character was unexpressed. The expression of *Naam* was prior to the creation of the universe. "God manifested Himself into *Naam* and at the second place the world was created." It is true that the Gurus quite often mention God as informing the universe. But in no scripture has the distinction between the transcendent and the immanent aspects of God been made more clear than in the *Guru Granth*; because God's Immanence has been given separate names, i.e., of *Naam*, Will and Word. In the *Guru Granth*, both the transcendent and immanent aspects of God are clearly specified and distinguished so as to avoid any confusion or a hasty conclusion that Sikhism is pantheistic. This Immanence of God in relation to the becoming world is only His aspect. It does not exhaust God. That is why God's immanent aspect has almost invariably been called His *Naam*, His Will, His Word. True, at a number of places, the Guru

describes God as informing the river, the fish, the boat, and everything. Perhaps, it is such verses as these that have led some to the superficial conclusion of Sikhism being pantheistic. But, all these verses are only a symbolic way of expressing the Immanence of God. The world is in God; it cannot be outside God. But, it is not God, being His creation. In modern monotheistic theologies, including Christian and Islamic, God's Transcendence and His Immanence in the created world are accepted. The verses referred to above do not at all indicate anything beyond the Immanence of God. This description of His Immanence and its operation in the world, metaphoric as it is, can mislead no one to any erroneous inference, especially when the Gurus have clearly stated that He is Transcendent too. "He is unmanifest and manifest at the same time."[6] "He is pervading everywhere (Immanent) and yet He is beyond everything, beyond pleasure and pain (Transcendent)."[7]

(vi) One of the chief objections to any pantheistic theology is the lack of any moral content or impact of such a view of the universe. Pantheistic philosophies, whether in the East, as in the case of Upanisads, or in the West, as in the case of Spinoza and Schopenhauer, are generally associated with pessimism, fatalism and lack of moral effort and responsibility on the part of the individual. The disasterous ethical consequences of pantheistic doctrines, including monism that downgrades the reality of the phenomenal world, are too well-known to be detailed here. In this context, we may like to see what is the ethical content and impact of the Guru's doctrines. In no religious system is the emphasis on moral conduct greater than in the *Guru Granth* where "truthful living or conduct has been declared higher than Truth itself."[8] The Guru says that man's assessment and approval before God will depend entirely on his deeds in this world. "Good deeds and bad deeds are weighed in God's Court. According to their own deeds, some are near, and some away from God."[9] Further, 'egoistic conduct' has been called 'the opposite of *Naam*'. *Naam* enjoins selfless and virtuous conduct, the same being the Treasure of all virtues. Judged from this emphasis on virtuous life and moral responsibility in Sikhism and its anti-deterministic view, we should evidently infer that Sikhism is monotheistic and not pantheistic.

(vii) There is a philosophic controversy whether or not mysticism of all kinds is monotheistic or pantheistic. Sikhism is undeniably based on the mystical experience. But so are religions like Christianity and Islam which are fanatically monotheistic. It is well-known that many of the great Christian and Muslim mystics

have been dubbed as heretical because their description of their mystical experiences could be construed to support a pantheistic view of God, even though these mystics were deeply reverential to their respective prophets. And few would call Christ and Prophet Mohammad as pantheists.

This confusion about mysticism being pantheistic has arisen for a number of reasons. One of them is the unwarranted assumption by thinkers like Huxley, Russell and Stace that all mysticism is of the same kind. But this is far from true. The bubble of this assumption stands pricked by Bergson, Zaehner and Iqbal. Their examination finds that Prophetic or Activity mysticism is a class by itself. It is entirely different from quietist mysticism on the basis of which pantheistic conclusions have been drawn. It is true that Christian mystics like Eckhart and Silesius and Muslim mystics like Hallaj and Abu Yazid have made statements that lend themselves to a pantheistic interpretation. But, these utterances were at the very start deemed to be heretical. In addition, subsequent explanations tend to give them a theistic colour. Eckhart himself virtually modified his earlier view by making the statement about 'a little point' of identity always subsisting during the mystic experience. As to Hallaj, Al Ghazali explains that utterances made by the mystic under the impact of the supra-sensory experience or mystic drunkenness should not be construed metaphysically. But, the far more important and relevant are the clear views of prophetic mystics like Christ and Muhammad themselves. All their sayings are unambiguously theistic. Secondly, there is the inherent difficulty of reducing non-rational mystic experiences to clear-cut rational categories and metaphysical concepts. More than once in the history of thought, the limitations of the rational and scientific method to comprehend the basic nature of Reality has been demonstrated. The empirical and the scientific method accepts the system of cause and effect. But this series when carried in regression ultimately leads to the causeless cause, thereby demolishing the very basis of the rationale. Similarly, Christian theology, in its anxiety to maintain its theistic approach, comes to accept the apparently illogical doctrine of creation *ex-nihilo*, an explanation which has been discarded by mystics like Bochme and Law. In Islamic thought its theism and the separateness of man are sought to be maintained by giving God entirely a Transcendent character. And, yet the Immanence of God is clearly implied by some of the sayings in the *Quran* itself. It is this difficulty of rational thought which makes Iqbal, the

distinguished philosopher of Islam, to concede that the result of an intellectual view of life is necessarily pantheistic.[10] And, it is Iqbal who propounds in theistic terms, the doctrine of Prophetic mysticism for the experience of Prophet Mohammad. All we wish to stress is the inadequacy of the rational method to draw a completely coherent picture or concept about the intuitional experiences of a higher consciousness that tend to grasp the totality of Reality compared to the normal experiences of man which are relative and partial in their apprehension.

It is in this background that we have to interpret the hymns of the Sikh Gurus. Guru Nanak and other Gurus have clearly stated that what they speak is the Word of God and not their own. They also emphasise that God can never be comprehended by the method of rational thought. Even a cursory reading of the *Guru Granth* brings out three things; Gurus' sense of deepest love and devotion towards God, a continuous search and prayer for the Grace of God and His 'Wholly Other' character. It is the last feature which a stressed by the emphatic repudiation of the doctrine of *Avtarhood*. All this leads one to the one and the only conclusion that the mystic experience of the Gurus, as expressed in the *Guru Granth*, clearly shows that God and the mystic are two distinct and separate entities, the latter being the servant of the former. In view of the above arguments, we come to the inevitable conclusion that the hymns in the *Guru Granth* lay down a strictly monotheistic system.

15

The World

One of the great basic tenets of Sikhism lies in its proclaiming the dynamic reality and authenticity of the world and of life. "God created the world of life and planted *Naam* therein, making it the place of righteous activity." "God created the world and permeated it with His Light."[1] Since *Naam*, God's Immanence, has not only created the world but is also supporting, controlling and directing it, the same cannot be unreal or illusory. His Immanence in this world guarantees its being a place of righteous activity and not being a fruitless or unwanted creation. In one form or the other, this idea about the reality of the world gets repeated expression and emphasis in the *Guru Granth*. "True are thy worlds and thy universes; true are the forms Thou createst. True are the deeds." "This world is the abode of the True One, He resides in it."[2] True is He, True is His creation."[3] "The body is the temple of God, created by Himself. Within it God resides."[4] "Nanak, the whole world is in bloom like a garden."[5]

The world being real, creative work and virtuous deeds are of fundamental importance. "The Guru contemplates God by word, thought and deed."[6] "Human birth is a precious privilege."[7] "*Earth* is the true abode of righteousness."[8] "Truth and continence are true deeds, not fasting and rituals."[9] "Good, righteousness, virtue and the giving up vice are the way to realize the essence of God."[10] Body is the horse on which one rides to God."[11]

The above excerpts from the *Guru Granth* affirm unambiguously the reality and significance of human life. Practices involving direct or indirect rejection or despising of life have been denounced. The human body is regarded as a privilege for making life fruitful by doing good deeds. Moral life in the world is deemed to be of the highest importance. The Gurus emphasise the idea that God adjudges each person according to his deeds in this world.

True, the world is changing one, but the Gurus describe it

as real and authentic. There is a hymn in the *Guru Granth* by Farid which would seem to suggest that the world is not real or is a place of suffering. While recording it in the *Guru Granth*, the fifth Guru has introduced along with it another hymn of his own, which is a clarification to dispel the contrary impression. He writes, "Beauteous, O Farid, are the garden of earth and the human body."[12] The Guru further states that "deride not the world as it is the creation of God."[13]

Here one point needs clarification. At some places the Gurus have observed that without understanding the reality of life all efforts are wasteful. Such verses do not at all condemn the world or human activity as such. They only mean that every ego-centric activity is fruitless. The Gurus only seek to stress that unless life is lived with the right approach and attitude all activity becomes useless. The fifth Guru, who has clearly denounced other-worldliness, likens self-centred activity to living in a house of sand."[14] The same thought has been presented from a different angle. Without knowing Him all that appears is false."[15] On the other hand, "If Thou entereth my courtyard, the whole earth becomes beauteous."[16] Similarly, the ninth Guru calls the world of the egoist as the cloud of smoke. But, for the God-centred person, he says, it is entirely different; as with the aid of God, "One's fetters are broken and one is all powerful."[17] The Gurus' criticism is not negative. In fact, while denouncing egoistic activities, they invariably stress the positive side, viz., the performance of moral and righteous activities in the world.

God, is greatly interested in the world. He 'revels in His creation', He is described as 'perpetually creating the world and benevolently nurturing His creation.' "God works through His creation."[18] This emphatic assertion about the authenticity of the world is a clear departure from the Indian religious tradition. It is, for that matter, radical in its implication. The Gurus were extremely conscious of this fundamental change they were making. That is why, both in their lives and in their hymns, they have been laying stress on this aspect of their spiritual thesis, lest they should be misunderstood on this basic issue. Living in this world is not a bondage for them but a rare opportunity. Not only is God benevolently developing and guiding the world in which He is Immanent, but each one of us is "yoked to his task and each is assigned a duty to perform."[19] The persistent interest of God in the creative movement is also obvious from the fact that the Gurus call Him Protector, Father, King, Emperor and a Just Administrator.

While discussing the concept of God of Attributes, Will and Grace, we have indicated its far-reaching implications about the reality of the world and the spiritual primacy of moral life therein. These aspects of God intimately connect Him with the world which is their only field of operation. For all these reasons, the Gurus call the world real. Consequently, their message and mission also relate to this world, wherein alone their mission could be fulfilled. No feeling or prayer has been expressed with greater depth and intensity than the one for the 'gift of *Naam*'. *Naam* being the Benevolent Supporter and Director of the world, what can be the gift of *Naam* to the devotee, except that of an enlightened, loving and creative interest in the world and in its development. How can one claim to be a devotee of God or *Naam* and ask for its gift or link with it, and, yet, decline to toe the line of God, viz., of nurturing and advancing the processes of creativity and construction in the world instead of being a recluse or a drop-out ? It is for this reason that the Gurus have strongly condemned all ascetic and escapist practices. "One reaches not Truth by remaining motionless like trees and stones, nor by being sawn alive."[20] "O Yogi, you are sitting in a trance, but you discriminate and have a sense of duality. You beg from door to door, are you not ashamed of it."[21] "Jainic asceticism, or even if the body were cut into bits, would not efface the dirt of ego."[22]

When we look back on the background in which Sikh Gurus propounded their spiritual thesis, one can well realise how imperative it was for them to stress this aspect of their mysticism. In India the ideal of four *Ashramas* has been a scripturally recognised spiritual way of life. Out of these four *Ashramas*, two, namely, the *Vanprastha* and the *Sanyasa Ashramas* distinctly enjoin an other-worldly approach to life. The house-holder's duties were not believed to be conducive to higher spiritual attainments. That is why, in order to make any progress in the spiritual field, one had to renounce worldly activities and take to the life of the hermit and *Sanyasin*. As against it, all the Sikh Gurus, excepting the eighth Guru, who passed away at an early age, were married house-holders. Till the last days of their lives, they worked creatively and carried out their mission in the social and political fields. Seen in the context of Indian tradition, the ideals and institutions of Sikhism are entirely different. For the Gurus the world is a place of beauty. Man's struggle therein provides an opportunity for his progress. Hence the arena of man's and mystic's work has to be in life and life alone. It is only the challenges of

life that enable man to show and test his moral and spiritual strength and stature. It is this conduct that forms the basis of his assessment. Here it would be pertinent to recall the Guru's dictum that "God is not attained by despising the world."[23]

The best understanding of the kind of interest in life the Gurus recommended for their disciples is gained from the lives they themselves lived. The Gurus went in for full participation in life. For them it would have been incongruous on the one hand to call life real and on the other to ignore the challenges of the socio-political life of their times.

The Guru's view about the world and their approach to it were an ideological, deliberate and clear departure from the Indian religious tradition. They led us on an entirely new spiritual path.

16

The Concept of Haumen

Having explained their ideas about God and the reality of world and life, the Gurus proceed to describe (a) the existing state of man and the causes of his pains and problems, (b) the right path for his spiritual progress and the solution of his difficulties, and (c) the goal of man and the characteristics of the ideal life. It is proposed to deal with each of these and allied issues in three different chapters.

The word *Manmukh* (Self-centred person) indicates the normal state of man in which his self-will and animal propensities dominate, and *Gurmukh* (God-centred one or superman) describes the ideal man or the highest level of mystic achievement and consciousness. The progress from *Manmukh* to *Gurmukh*, or from self-centred person to a God-centred person, constitutes, in a way, the entire story of Sikh mysticism. In the *Guru Granth* many ideas are intimately linked with this development. The Guru feel that, at the present level, man's main limitations and problems arise from his *Haumen*. No understanding of the Gurus' system is possible without knowing fully the significance and implications of the concept of *Haumen*, which is fundamental to its structure and holds the key to its theology. We shall first explain this doctrine.

Haumen

Haumen cannot be adequately translated but the word ego would be the nearest to its meaning. *Haumen* is the conscious subject, the "I" of the normal individual psyche. It is the director of all one's organs and limbs including the nervous system. The word *Ahankara* would not be quite appropriate, because this word basically represents a concept in a dualistic system like the Samkhya in which *Ahankara* is the transformation and growth of the eternal *Prakriti*. The Gurus assume no such *Prakriti*. For them *Haumen* represents the human individuality that is not God-oriented. It is the self, the ego, the 'stream of consciousness' or

the centre of control of all working, deliberation and propulsion in any being or unit of life.

Haumen God-Created

The Gurus say that "the world came' into being by individuation."[1] Evidently, for the growth of life, this creation of an individual self or *Haumen* in every being was essential. There could be no animal life without there being in each organism a centre of consciousness or autonomy. It is this *Haumen* which has enabled the evolution of life from the smallest being to the extremely complicated biologic structure of man. It is impossible to conceive of a being without the centre of its functioning and control.

Every man is equipped with many kinds of organs and faculties. He has the sensory organs of perception and the nervous system which is also the organ of reflection and deliberation. These faculties, including his thoughts, are subservient to his individuality, self or ego. Throughout the evolution of life over millions of years this ego has been the instrument and guardian of one's security, welfare and progress. Without a deep commitment to the interests, preservation and progress of the self, to the exclusion of every other being of self, life could never survive the battle against challenges from the environment, including the climate, the elements and other beings. This ego has been the best guarantee for securing both the survival and the progress of life from amoeba to man.

The problem of Haumen

What has been the surest means of life's survival and progress has now, according to the Gurus, become "the great disease."[2] of man. The struggle against the elements and inter-species competition having been considerably won, man finds himself quite unequipped and helpless in the inter-species dealings and struggle between man and man. The Gurus repeatedly emphasise that this *Haumen*, egoism or self-centredness is the greatest problem of man. The reason is obvious. Just as it is impossible for one's stomach or liver to digest food for another person, in the same way it is impossible for one's thought system to be anything but self-centred, the same being subservient to the individual self. It is this organic condition of man that the Gurus call *Haumen* or self-centredness.

True, certain altruistic tendencies have been developed as the

result of cultural conditioning over the years. But, this altruism is only superficial or conditioned. Spontaneous altruism is constitutionally and psychologically impossible in the animal-man. The moment the struggle for existence becomes keen, the basic self-centredness of man is unmasked and becomes dominant in its manifestation. 'Honesty is the best policy' so long as it works to one's well being, otherwise the fangs of self-centredness become bared in their naked ugliness. This the spectacle we witness everyday in the behaviour of individuals, groups, classes, societies and nations.

According to the Gurus' concept of God, He is the Father and all persons are His children. "He belongs to all and all belong to Him."[3] "There is one Father and we are His children."[4] "Let all be called high, to me no one appears low. One potter has fashioned all vessels and one light prevades the whole universe."[5] "Be thou the dust for all men to tread upon, and know that thy Lord is in every heart."[6] The way to God, according to the Gurus, is to realise and accept this idea of the brotherhood of man and express it truthfully and spontaneously in our conduct. "One cannot be a Yogi by mere wishing. The real Yoga lies in treating alike all beings."[7] But, *Haumen* or self-centredness is the chief hurdle in the way of man's progress. "God is within us, but is not known because of the curtain of *Haumen* (ego) in between."[8] "Husband (God) and wife (soul) live side by side, but the impregnable wall of *Haumen* (ego) separates them."[9] "This foolish egoist remains a stranger to himself. Only when he deems himself to be the lowest of all, he sees God in all hearts."[10]

Haumen and Maya

In the *Guru Granth* the word *Maya* appears quite often. Literally, and in the traditional literature, the word means the power of illusion. But, for the Gurus the world is not an illusion. Their emphasis is on the authenticity of life. As such, what does *Maya* mean in the *Guru Granth*? For the Gurus a life of *Haumen* is a life of *Maya*. "In ego is *Maya*"[11] "Whoever is afflicted by duality is the slave of *Maya*."[12] "Intoxicated with *Maya* one is vain and mean, thereby getting away from God."[13] "*Maya* is that which causes us to forget God, by which attachment and a sense of duality are produced.[14]

The *Guru Granth* does not subscribe to anything like the unreality of the physical world. Nor is *Maya* a cognitive error caused by the universe. There is nothing deceptive in the objective

world that could mislead us. *Maya* is the subjective error of accepting a wrong point of view, the failure of man to look at things in the proper perspective of the unity of life. This error of man is not conceptual or perceptual, but it is ethical inadequacy and moral infirmity that are to blame. Misled by the ego and passions, the individual ignores the basic reality of the brotherhood of man. Instead, he assumes the separateness of individuals, involving himself in immoral and destructive conflicts. The way to rectify this human weakness is neither to have a new mental picture of the world and man, nor to raise a new concept, but to accept a new ethical standard. The remedy is to make a moral effort by disciplining one's passions and controlling one's selfish propensities. 'The wonder of man becoming God' can be performed only by virtuous conduct and deeds. It naturally follows that *Maya* means a distorted and jaundiced ethical assumption or viewpoint. It is in this sense *Maya* is practically synonymous with *Haumen* or egoism.

True, at some places the world has been called an illusion. But, *Maya* is an illusion in the same sense as the Guru's verse that "without realising the truth about life all our efforts are in vain."[15] To call the world *Maya* is just another way of emphasising the need for developing the right understanding and approach and discarding the fallacious ones. Obviously, while a man is governed by *Haumen*, he is in *Maya*. It is the perverted vision of *Haumen* or *Maya* that distorts our view of the world. This wrong way of looking at things from only an individual's point of view, in violation of the basic unity and harmony of life inherent in the idea of God, is termed *Maya*.

Haumen and its vices

The Gurus enumerate five principal classes of vices of *Haumen* or egoism. They are lust (*Kam*), anger (*Krodh*), greed and coveteousness (*Lobh*), attachment (*Moh*) and pride (*Ahankar*, this word is also used as virtually synonymous with egoism. But, here we take it to mean only pride). "O God, I seek thy protection; dispel lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride."[16] These vices are all the aggressive manifestations of *Haumen*, with the consequent inability of man to see others as his equals and to consider their point of view. Lust is just the satisfaction of one's own passions at the cost of others. Anger is the reaction symptom of frustration of one's base motives in the environmental field. Greed is just one's sense of individual possessiveness in conflict with the interests of

others. *Moh* is undue attachment to persons and things one feels as one's own. In addition, this attachment is to the exclusion of the just rights and well-being of others. The last category of vice is the sense of pride or aggressiveness. It involves trampling upon the rights of others. It is an ugly and sadistic satisfaction in feeling superior to others by humiliating them and encroaching upon what is theirs. Pride is probably the most insatiable of human vices that leads to the worst of human conflicts and wars. It is the irony of human culture that some of the anti-social and anti-human institutions like those of slavery and property, class and national divisions, caste and pollution, inequality of status and sexes, political dominance and territorial aggrandisement have been created with these vices as their basic. We shall consider this issue further while dealing with the subject of ethics and the socio-political efforts of the Gurus.

Haumen and evil

The problem of evil has confronted all religious systems. Virtually, all our vices, frustrations and insecurity spring from *Haumen.* It is the nature of every animal, including the self-centred man, to be guided by *Haumen.* The animals are constitutionally incapable of rising above it. They are not to blame for their failure to do so. Therefore, in their case the problem of evil has no significance. But, the failure of the self-centred man, whom the Gurus call *Manmukh*, to understand the unity of life leads to all the personal, social and political problems, including the greatest modern problems of poverty and wars. The Gurus clearly attribute the problem of evil to human self-centredness. This *Haumen* is due to the present constitution of man which he is capable of transcending. As such, the problem of evil is, indeed, the problem of the imperfection of man. This problem of imperfection or evil cannot be used as a handle to demolish the idea of God. When God was by Himself, there was nothing good or bad. Nor was there love or devotion since there was nothing beside God. In terms of human logic all perfection is static. But, the fundamental criterion of life is movement or change. No change means no life. While all perfection is static, all changes and all qualities are relative and hierarchical. It is impossible to conceive of life, movement, change or qualities except in terms of comparison, relations and imperfections. Imperfection, thus, becomes the hallmark of life and of a becoming world. We shall discuss the issue further while considering the problem of freedom and responsibility. Here it is

enough to indicate that it is this imperfection described by relational words like good, bad or evil, indicating only comparative differences of quality, that become the basis of all striving for moral and spiritual life.

It is often said that whereas the Western psyche and religions are seriously concerned with the problem of evil, almost to the point of raising it as a bogey and developing a morbid sense of guilt, Eastern religions are somewhat fatalistic, apathetic and unresponsive to it. Sikh mysticism is neither obsessed with the problem, nor is it oblivious of it. In fact, the presence of evil, which is due to *Haumen* or the animal-man's make-up, is recognised as the greatest challenge to man. But, it cannot become the basis to condemn man, life or God. One does not blame the egg for not being a full fledged bird. Nor is it necessary to raise the symbol of *Satan* to explain it. Evil is due to the inherent imperfection of every being who is in the egoist state.

17

Solution

Having diagnosed the desease and its cause, the Sikh Gurus feel neither unconcerned nor dismayed about it. They do not turn their back to life by saying that all life is a suffering or evil. Nor do they preach that the only way of release from *Samsara* is *Nirvana*. While they attribute all our difficulties, frustrations and conflicts to *Haumen*, they do not dub man as evil or an unredeemable sinner. They never hold retreat as an ideal of life. Nor do they, like some existentialists, shrink with fear and feel condemned to freedom. Instead, they not only fully accept life and its challenges; but call the world a beautiful garden and place of great opportunity. They feel confident that the hurdle of *Haumen* can overcome. In fact, the entire message of the Sikh Gurus is meant to solve this problem. Theirs is a crusade to enable man to rise above his present level and remove the hurdles and solve the problems that face him.

The Way Out

Here the Gurus explain their system and suggest the solution clearly and emphatically. It is this solution which is the basis of their mystic system, discipline and institutions.

God is the Director of the World, the Treasure of Attributes and Values. The remedy, according to the Gurus, is that we should be guided by God-consciousness and not by self-centredness. Such a God-centred person is called a *Gurmukh*. "God created individuation but by forgetting *Naam* we come to grief."[1] "*Naam* and *Haumen* are opposed to each other. The two cannot be at the same place."[2] It is a verse of the highest significance, meaning and implications. Let us amplify it.

The Gurus accept life in *toto*. Thus call it as the only opportunity for man to play his destined role. In most other religious systems, mystic living and worldly life are considered as opposed to each other. This is the lesson derived from the system

of the four *Ashramas*. In Buddhism, too, *Nirvana* and *Samsara* are opposed to each other.[3] It is not so in Sikh mysticism. Here only egoism, not the worldly life as such, is opposed to the spiritual life. The way to God is through life, not through its renunciation.

The second corollary of the idea is that self-centredness must be substituted by God-centredness. In the *Guru Granth* two types of human beings have been mentioned, the *Manmukh* and the *Gurmukh*. We shall elaborate on this issue while dealing with the subject of the mystic goal. Here it is enough to say that the man who is self-centred is far from God. "*Haumen* (ego) is a deep malady. The remedy is to attune one's self to *Naam* by God's Grace."[4] "With fear of God in mind one loses egoism."[5] "Drive out lust and anger, be the servant of all and see the Lord in all hearts."[6] "Spontaneous service of others characterises the Godly."[7]

The third corollary is that far from giving up worldly life, the same is essential for the mystic, seeker and the God-centred person. The very word God-centred assumes activity on the part of the mystic. Since God is creative, the God-centred too has to be creative. The system does not become rudderless. Only self-centredness is substituted by God-consciousness. In fact, life and its activities alone reveal the distinction between a self-centred man and a God-centred one. Hence, "he who destroys evil becomes a perfect man."[8] "Love, contentment, truth, humility and other virtues enable the seed of *Naam* to sprout."[9] "Our deeds alone bear witness unto our life."[10]

The above hymns of the Gurus indicate that the way to the mystic achievement lies in being altruistic or moral instead of being self-centred. Except for some conditioned or calculated altruism, a self-centred person cannot be spontaneously altruistic. The solution really consists in transferring the control of the mind from *Haumen* to *Naam*, the Dynamic and Attributive Immanence of God represented by his *Hukam*, *Raza* or Will. It is the essence of the doctrine of *Haumen* that God consciousness involves neither inactivity nor withdrawal from life, but whole-hearted spontaneous altruistic deeds. Just as *Haumen* and *Naam* are opposed to each other. In the same manner God-centredness and inactivity are a contradiction in terms.

Link with God Possible

The Gurus assert the presence of a Higher Power or God in man and that it is possible for man to become conscious of him. Whether that consciousness of God involves a relationship of

union, merger or of any other kind is a separate question. But, the point of primary importance is that it is possible for man to develop such a relationship, or a new state of being or consciousness. The Gurus stress again and again that God pervades all hearts and one can attune oneself to Him. While we are in the normal ego-state we are unconscious of this Immanence of God in us, "where there is egoism, God is not; where there is God, there cannot be any egoism."[11] "God unites seeker with himself." "God pervades the heart and one gives up ego and evil." "They live in the presence of God and are attuned to Him." "By His Grace God comes in body and mind."[12] It means that the entire psyche of such a person is guided by god-consciousness. "By *Naam* is the mind illumined."[13] "O my mind you are the image of Light. Know the Lord. God is within you."[14] "In the body is Lord's Jewel." "Immaculate is body. Immaculate is the soul; in it is *Naam*, the Essence of God. God abides in the mind of all."[15]

These hymns emphasise the idea that God resides within the human heart and the way to solve our problems and difficulties is to establish a relation with Him. This presence of God in us has variously been described as *Naam*, Guru, Word, Light and Will.

Freedom and Responsibility

The question of human freedom and necessity has been a difficult one in all religious and philosophic systems. Empirical logic has failed to resolve this problem. And yet the ethical and moral needs of man are intimately linked with this issue. All religious systems must, therefore, furnish an answer to this basic question. It is our purpose here to give the Gurus' views on the subject.

As uncompromising theists, the Gurus obviously do not subscribe to any notion of materialism or mechanism. In their system, prayer, love and grace have a primary significance and place. Their ideas *Ipso facto* repudiate all notions about determinism or necessity.

One of the greatest contributions of the Gurus is their idea of God being a creator who, as a God of Will and Attributes, is helping an evolutionary movement towards a being who is God-conscious. Let us try to elaborate and understand the significance of this concept.

The idea of determinism is only a logical abstraction from our daily experience of cause and effect. As already stated, when pursued backwards, this idea of every effect being determined by

a cause breaks down. Perforce we come to a dead end as to what is the first cause. To this causeless cause or Un-created Creative cause the Gurus give the name of a Creator who has a Will. A Creator with a Will implies freedom to create on the part of the Self-created Creator. Otherwise, the very idea of a Creator with a Will would be a contradiction in terms. In other words, God has a Free Will. God is a Being who is the Master of the ways of His functioning and we do not know them. He is Free. He is not determined by the laws of our world.

The Gurus envisage a clear process of evolution in this world. Man, according to the Gurus, is the highest evolved being. He is not only conscious but he is also self-conscious. He has a clear capacity for discernment, reflection and deliberation. This is an attribute higher than that of other animals. Life affords man an opportunity to become a God-centred being. "This alone is your opportunity; seek within."[16] "You have been given a human body; this is your opportunity to meet God."[17]

The very suggestion or persuasion to avail oneself of this opportunity, implies a freedom and capacity on the part of man to do so. The Gurus indicate a clear movement from comparative determinism to freedom taking place in this world. From apparently mechanistic matter, there appeared conscious life. Then appeared the self-conscious man with an increasing capacity for choice, deliberation and consequent freedom. The final achievement is to be a God-conscious person, the creative instrument of Free God or a living-centre of freedom. Seen in this light, the Gurus envisage a distinct evolutionary movement from comparative necessity to freedom. The more a person is free and creative, for creation assumes freedom, the nearer is he to God. This is the yardstick with which the Gurus measure a man and his progress.

In addition, there is the moral argument which, in a way, is co-extensive with the argument of freedom. We have seen that the Gurus call God as the Ocean of Values and the True Judge. If everyone were governed by rigid determinism, the question of any moral assessment would not arise. In a deterministic world, words like 'true and false', 'right or wrong', 'good or bad', 'helpful or harmful', have no meaning; nor would words like 'ought and ought not', 'regret and happiness', 'wisdom and folly', 'just and unjust', have any significance in the case of man. These terms are never applied to the virtually determined and mechanistic world of matter. And, yet, the mystic system of the Gurus is deeply moral and ethical in its content. God is called the True One Good, Just, Benevolent and

Shelter of the shelterless. The Gurus call our world, the very place of righteousness. The assessment and approval of man are based on the character of man's deeds. If human actions were predetermined, they could hardly be called his deeds, much less could they have a moral character or be judged by the yardstick of righteousness. No one can be morally assessed unless he has the freedom of choice which he exercises voluntarily. The Gurus' entire emphasis is to persuade and exhort man to exercise the right choice. They blame man for his sufferings and frustrations since these follow from his wrong choice of deeds. The way out is to be moral and righteous, i.e., to be more free and responsible. It is by this choice of freedom and righteousness that man becomes God-centred, a synonym for release and freedom from comparative necessity and determinism.

The Gurus do not accept the doctrine of *Karma*, if it is to be understood in any fatalistic or deterministic sense. Their idea is of a Creative God, with a Will and Purpose, who is greatly concerned with the improvement and evolution of his creation and the imperfect beings. The *Guru Granth*, clearly controverts the deterministic *Karmic* doctrine by saying that "When there was no universe, how did the first being inherit *Karma*, or who created *Karma* initially."[18] "You say that body is made of five elements, from where were the elements created ? You say that man is bound by his *Karma*, who created the law of *Karma* ?"[19] "When there was neither father, nor mother, nor form, nor *Karma*, when neither were you there, nor was I there, what came from where ? When there was no *Veda* and *Shastra*, from where did *Karma* originate ?"[20] The idea of creativity and growth are an integral part of the Gurus' view of life and morality. And then, there is the basic concept of Grace over-riding and controverting the doctrine of *Karma*.

The Gurus distinctly say that God creates man and grants him freedom to decide course of his life. "Lord created the world and left it free to do as it wills."[21] "According to their deeds, some are near and some far from God.[22] "Man is blessed with the light of reason and discrimination."[23] "Vices are like chains around our necks and virtues the only friend."[24]

All these quotations from the *Guru Granth* clearly envisage freedom on the part of man to make any decisions he likes with regard to his deeds. Had man been rigidly governed by his past and the course of his present and future actions been determined by his previous deeds, all these exhortations to man to reshape

his future would be without the importance and significance the Gurus attach to them. Evidently the Gurus do not accept the validity of any *Karmic* or deterministic law. On the other hand, they consistently stress the freedom of man to determine the course of his activities.

No doubt, there are sayings like "why blame others, it is our own doings that lead us astray."[25] It is also true that the idea of "as you sow, so shall you reap" is there. But, all this only fortifies the principle of free will and the moral responsibility of man. There is nothing in the *Guru Granth* to endorse the deterministic *Karmic* doctrine of traditional Brahmanism. This concept has been specifically refuted in the *Guru Granth*. The idea of "as you sow, so shall you reap," is just an appeal and exhortation to the limited sovereignty of man, so as to invoke his sense of reason, initiative, responsibility and growth.

Another point also needs clarification. It has been stated by the Gurus that everything happens according to the Will of God. This is just an assertion about the Omnipotence of God which is inherent in any theistic concept. It actually appears in all theistic religions like Islam and Christianity. The *Quran* stresses God's complete Omnipotence in thoughts like : "His is the command and unto Him ye will be brought back. You cannot will except by the Will of Allah."[26] "Whom Allah Wills, he sendenth astray, and whom He Wills, He placeth on straight path."[27] "He created all things and ordained their destinies."[28] "Everyman's destiny have we fastened on his neck. It shall be as Allah pleases."[29]

Similarly, Jesus prayed before his crucification, "My Father ! If it is possible, let this cup be taken away from me. But I want Your Will, not mine."[30] It only indicates that it is God's Will that is operative. God is 'the First and the Last' both in Christianity and Islam. He being the Sole Entity, the question of anyone else's will does not arise. He makes the laws, and, yet, in all theistic religions the emphasis on morality is primary. There is no contradiction between the two ideas. Man has the choice to ignore God's Will. God being the Ocean of Virtues, His Will is moral. But man can and does flout it. Unless man has the freedom to make decisions, the question of his being responsible or being blamed for evil and sin cannot arise. But, in the Gurus' system, moral life is the only way to spiritual achievement. Similarly, it is the chief obligation and characteristic of the superman to lead a life of virtue. It would just be naive to suggest that the concept of the Omnipotence of God and the primacy of God's Will leads to the negation of moral life.

Such a deterministic concept is contrary to the teachings of the *Guru Granth*, for the entire responsibility for leading a moral life is on man. In Sikhism moral life and spiritual life are one and the same. Moral life is the way to the spiritual progress and spiritual life is spontaneously moral.

Even from the last prayer of Jesus it is evident that he could act according to his own will, but he did not want to escape crucification if it was God's Will. But he had the option which he exercised in favour of God's Will being done. This is exactly the difference between a theistic system like Sikhism and a pantheistic, monistic system or a deterministic one where man has no responsibility. This is illustrated by the story of a sinner. After his death, he was, because of his misdeeds, barred by Agni-Rudra from entering the realm of the sun or heaven. But the man's reply to the deity was that God being witness to all his deeds and having made him to do everything, he was blameless. The logic of the argument was accepted by the God, and he was admitted into heaven."[31] As against this, in Sikhism, everyman is responsible for his deeds. The validity of moral life forms the very fundamental tenet of the Guru's system. The concept of a God of Will does not in any way conflict with the concept of a God of Attributes and Values and One who is Ever-creative. The *Guru Granth* repeatedly stresses that the responsibility for good or evil acts is that of the individual. This idea is presented ironically when it is said that "with torch in hand one falls in well."[32] It means that we have both the freedom and the responsibility to avoid vice. It is the character of the choice we make that indicates the level of our growth and the sense of our freedom and responsibility.

The final cure of Haumen

True, it is only virtuous and altruistic deeds that lead one away from the life of *Haumen* and towards the path of *Naam* or God-centredness. But, ultimately it is only God's Grace that unites one with *Naam*. By this union a new and higher centre of consciousness is gained, called God-consciousness. "With God's Grace is the ultimate insignia of approval conferred on man."[33] Without doubt, it is the practice of virtues that alone can merit Grace. While one has to work altruistically to merit Grace, the same by its very nature cannot be earned. The very idea of effort for achievement raises a sense of pride. And pride becomes suicidal and self-defeating from the point of view of receiving Grace. Besides, the idea of merit, if seen from the logical angle, is

somewhat deterministic. It is contrary to the very concept of God-consciousness which involves creativity and freedom. One can never achieve the final stage of creative freedom by deterministic methods. The achievement of God-centredness by man has, by its very nature, to be an act of the Grace of the Wholly Free and Creative Being. God alone is the final judge of human progress. But, this should not suggest any idea of arbitrariness and fatalism. It only invokes man to be progressively moral, responsible, creative and free. For Grace itself is an aspect of the Creative and the Free.

Message and mission of the Gurus

On the issue, what is his message and mission, Guru Nanak is extremely precise and concise. He leaves no one in ambiguity about it. His message is that it is man's destiny, and of man alone, to remedy the malady of *Haumen* and uplift himself into a new being and consciousness. The Guru puts the question as to "how the wall of falsehood intervening between us and Reality can be removed and gives the categorical reply that "it can be done by carrying out God's Will." This is the gist of Guru Nanak's message and teachings. In the *Sidh Gosht* he specifies his life's mission just in one line. His object, he says, is, with the help of other God-centred persons, to make everyone cross this sea of difficulty or solve the problem of *Haumen*, i.e., to make every *Manmukh* a *Gurmukh*. In the Gurus' eyes *Manmukh* is not in a hopeless state of mind. The Gurus' message and mission are thus related to man so as to elevate him, because he alone has the capacity for a higher life.

Here it is essential to mention two things. The Gurus have repeatedly indicated a continuing process of development, evolution and progress in the empirical world. Further, they clearly point out that progress from egoistic man to the superman or God-centred man is not only possible, but is in accordance with the purpose of God. In the hymns of Cosmography already quoted, an ascending order of created forms and beings is indicated. The Gurus have stated that individuation was created by God. There has been gradual growth from small organisms, to animals, and finally to the animal-man, with his subtle sense of discrimination and introspection. "For several births (you) were a mere worm, for several births an insect, for several births a fish and animal," "after ages you have the glory of being a man."[34] "after passing through myriads of species, one is blest with the human form"[35] "God created you out of a drop of water and breathed life in you. He

endowed you with the light of reason, discrimination and wisdom."[36] "O man, you are supreme in God's creation; now is your opportunity, you may fulfil or not fulfil your destiny."[37]

Further progress of this egoistic man depends entirely on the deeds of the individual. Till man had appeared on the scene, it was not possible for life to outgrow its animal existence and alienation from God. So far, like other animals, man too has been living an animal life. But, the Gurus emphasise the opportunity available to man to grow into a superman.

The Gurus repeatedly address man to give up this egocentric activities and thereby to rise to his full stature. "After ages, this invaluable opportunity of human birth is available, but one loses it for nothing;" "One loses a ruby in exchange for a piece of broken glass."[38] "Among eighty-four lakhs of species, man is assigned the supreme position, whosoever misses the opportunity , suffers the pain of transmigration."[39] "Human birth is the epitome of fruitful effort, but man loses it for a trite."[40] "You have obtained the privilege of human birth, now is your only opportunity to meet God."[41] This is how we understand Guru Nanak's reply to the Sidhas that his mission was, with the help of other God-conscious persons, to assist man to grow into a superman. He wanted thereby to help the process of evolution and creativity to supermanhood, flowering into a beautiful world of God.

18

Goal and Gurmukh

We now come to the last phase of the progress of man. The goal represents the crucial aspect of any religion or mysticism. For, it evidently governs, colours and determines the entire structure of the system, its concepts, institutions and discipline. Secondly, it is in this field that the Gurus have made a completely radical departure from the general mystic tradition, more especially from the Indian tradition. Thirdly, we find that many misunderstandings, about the theology, growth and history of Sikhism, arise from a casual or inadequate knowledge of the human goal laid down by the Gurus. Such ignorance is quite understandable in the case of persons who are votaries of other system and judge Sikhism by their own yardsticks. For example, persons with a mechanistic or a materialistic philosophy of any variety would, naturally, tend to interpret and view all systems, including that of the Gurus, in terms of their own belief. But, unfortunately, many of the distortions about Sikhism are made by persons whose claim to knowledge of Sikhism, if judged on the basis of the *Guru Granth*, is hardly tenable. It is with this background, and for the above reasons, that we should like to give the subject of the goal a special treatment, even though many of the related ideas have appeared earlier in one form or the other. The subject, in order to be self-explanatory, has to be studied under three heads : the goal, the characteristics and role of the ideal man and the lives of the Gurus. All these matters are intimately inter-connected with each other. But, for the purpose of clarity, whereas the first two matters will be dealt with in this chapter, the third will receive separate treatment.

1. GOAL

No issue has been made explicit and emphasised so much as the problem of human goal. The Gurus have explained their views by enunciating different doctrines. All of them point out to the same conclusion about the ideal life. Here we shall only state

the concepts and doctrines which prescribe the human goal.

(a) Righteous deeds alone basis of assessment: In the first hymn of Cosmography, Guru Nanak gives what should be the role of man on earth which has been declared to be a place for the practice of righteousness. The ideal prescribes the performance of virtuous deeds and not of ritualism, Yogic meditations and asceticism. It has been clearly stressed that the assessment of man will be made on the basis and character of his deeds. The same idea has been repeated in the *Guru Granth* in numerous hymns like, "With God only the deeds one does in this world count."[1] For, "through virtue is one enlightened."[2]

(b) Higher than Truth is Truthful Living: In the following words Guru Nanak has stated an extremely important dictum of Sikhism. "Everything is lower than truth, but higher still is truthful living." It is just a symbolic way of emphasising that the ideal is to live the active life of truth and not only to know Truth as an end in itself. As to what is the life of truth and good conduct, the Gurus themselves have exemplified the same. In addition, the description of the qualities of God and the God-centred man shows what is truthful living. The goal is to live an active and creative life. "True living is living God in life."[3]

(c) Carry out the Will of God: Guru Nanak declares that the goal of man cannot be reached through the intellect or wisdom, howsoever one may try; nor can it be achieved by the ascetic practices. The Guru raises specifically the question as to how one can be a true human being, a *Sachiars* or an ideal man. To this the Guru provides a clear-cut answer: "By carrying out the Will of God." The Gurus conceive of God as a God of Will. He is a Dynamic Creative God whose Ever-creative and a Attributive Will is operative in the world with a direction and a purpose. For man, therefore, the ideal life is to carry out His Will. It is the ideal of doing creative activity in the universe as God's instrument. That is why in Sikhism the goal of personal salvation is excluded. The Gurus declare that it is possible for man to know His Will. The goal is not only to establish union with God, nor only to know His Will, but, after having done that, to carry it out. The ideal is not blissful union as an end in itself, but union with a view both to knowing His Will and carrying it out. It is the same thing as saying that the ideal is not to know the Truth but to live the life of Truth.

(d) God-conscious man: On the question of *Haumen*, we came to the conclusion that activities of the ordinary self-centred

man are the cause of all social evils and conflicts. As against it, the Gurus hold out the God-centred man as the ideal. Because of his new consciousness he is full of virtues as attributed to God. The mystic ideal is of active God-consciousness. All exhortations to man are to achieve this supermanship by the practice of virtues. "In the soil of your body sow the seed of godly deeds. In that field God sprouts."

(e) Link with Naam : For the Gurus, *Naam* is engaged in directing the world to become a place of values, harmony and beauty. A very large number of hymns in the *Guru Granth* are prayers for one's being united with *Naam*. "He reaches the highest stage whom God benevolently yokes to His *Naam*."[4] "To be imbued with *Naam* is the essence of true living."[5] "Pray, link me to God."[6]

Accordingly, the ideal of Sikhism is to be yoked, attuned or linked to *Naam* in order to lead the world of man to an altruistic goal. *Naam* being the opposite of egoism, this progressive movement is towards an ideal in which selfishness and egoism disappear and qualities of *Naam* are practised. To be linked to *Naam* only means to become its instrument and share the responsibility of a creative and virtuous development in the world. The practice of *Naam* and its ethics, is both the ideal and "the sovereign remedy of all ills and evils"[7] and the way to human development. As in the case of the ideal of God-centredness, here too the same discipline and development are prescribed, viz., of shedding vice and practising virtue.

The Gurus have laid down these five doctrines prescribing the goal in Sikhism. Whether it is the ideal of God-consciousness or of carrying out the Will of God, or the gift of *Naam*, in essence all of them convey the same spiritual truth. Again, whether it is the ideal of righteous deeds or of truthful living, the discipline and the direction are exactly the same. We, therefore, come to the obvious conclusion that in Sikhism the goal is of creative and moral activity and that spiritual life and moral life are virtually synonymous and coextensive. One inevitably leads to the other. All training for spiritual life or for seeking God's Grace is through moral life. There is no dichotomy between the two kinds of life. This is evidently the basic plank in Sikhism. Life on earth is a single spiritual or religious venture. It has to be availed of as a God-sent opportunity for spiritual growth. No segment of life is unimportant, nor can anyone be divorced or excluded from the spiritual field. Life's divisions into spiritual life, social life and political life are

man-made, arbitrary and untenable. Life is a single whole; it has to be lived spiritually or morally. No part of life is taboo to the spiritual man. The mystic cannot afford to ignore any section of life as unbecoming for him; nor can he spurn to aid any man whatever be his situation.

(f) The ideal to make everyone a Superman : Human goal is to lead a righteous and a God-centred life. But God-centredness has one more implication. In the *Sidh Gosht*, Guru Nanak has clearly specified that his mission is to remove man's alienation from God.[8] Guru Nanak thus explains as to what he means by 'carrying out His Will' and executing God's mission of creating a society of God-centred men. "The God-conscious man achieves the goal and makes all others do so."[9] That is exactly the reason why the Gurus have described themselves as 'servants of God', 'soldiers in God's Legion', or 'wrestlers in the cause of God'. God is the creator of the universe. Invariably the Gurus pray that their lives may be devoted to the service of God. "May I have millions of hands to serve Thee. Service is the way to cross the hurdles of life."[10] "Be ever alert in the service of God. Serve God every moment and relax not."[11] As the world is the authentic creation of God, supported by His Immanence, the service of God means the service of His creation, namely, this world, this life and this man. "Service in the world leads to approval in the Court of God."[12]

In Sikhism, the highest attainment is to become God's instrument in making every human being God-centred. It is the creative state from which altruistic activities start. It is somewhat like the *Bodhisattvic* ideal with the difference that here service of man both precedes and succeeds the mystic achievement. *Nirvana* is not an end by itself. Much less is *Nirvana* a higher ideal than God-centred service of man.

2. WHETHER IDEAL UNION OR MERGER

It needs to be clarified whether the ideal of Sikh mysticism is union or link with God, or merger in God. Before the creation of the world, God was all by Himself, in a Self-absorbed state. There was no visible sign of any form, devotion, love or creative activity. In that state, God's Will, *Naam* or Attributes were not expressed, since they have relevance only in the created world.

At the next stage, universe was created. Since then God's *Naam* and Will have become expressed and creative functioning in the universe goes on. The suggestion of merger in God in this

state involves virtually a reversion to the first state of God being Self-absorbed. This reversal would evidently be counter to the expressed Creative Will of God. True, there are some hymns in the *Guru Granth* where merger with God would appear to be indicated, but this merger means only a link or union with the Creative Immanence of God. For, merger involves loss of identity and can be possible only in a pantheistic creed and not a theistic creed like Sikhism.

We give below a few quotations from the *Guru Granth* which clarify the issue :

(i) "His body and mind are imbued entirely with the hue of *Naam* and he lives always in the company of God; as one stream of water intermingles with another, in the same manner his light merges in the Light of God."[13]

(ii) "The *Gurmukh* is all admiration for the Attributes of God; and he remains merged in God."[14]

(iii) "*Brahmgyani* looks solely to God for all support."[15] "God lives by the side of *Brahmgyani.*"[16]

(iv) "He devotes himself to God with his whole being and remains merged in God."[17]

All these and similar other hymns are significant, because the idea of the superman's identity being different from that of God appears, in the same hymn, side by side with the idea of his apparent merger in God. Evidently, the Gurus would not give two contradictory concepts in the same breath. Therefore, the seeming symbols of merger only signify a link or union between the superman and God, especially, as in all these and other such hymns, the superman has been indicated as a separate and functioning entity.

As amplified below, the above is the one and only one acceptable interpretation.

(i) The Gurus do not contemplate two kinds of ideals for their disciples, one of link with the Creator and the other of one's merger in the Self-absorbed state of God, even while the created world exists and is being dynamically worked by His Immanence. The latter ideal would be self-contradictory. Nowhere in Sikhism do we find the least evidence or suggestion of two alternative ideals or duality of goals. Such a thing is contrary to the very fundamentals expressed in the *Guru Granth*. This is opposed to the entire Sikh tradition which is not only against withdrawal from life, but stands for active participation in the world.

Merger in the anonymity of Brahman may be the ideal in the other Indian systems or salvation religions, where the world is either an illusion or of a lower category, or where participation in *Samsara* is anti-spiritual. But, it cannot be the aim where God is the Creator of this beautiful world, which is the only field of His Will and Attributive Activity. The goal is not heaven or salvation, but love of Creative *Naam*. "Scores of heavens cannot equal God's *Naam*. The God-conscious man has no desire for salvation."[18] "I seek not power, nor salvation; pray, give me the love of God."[19]

(ii) The six concepts and doctrines, discussed with reference to the ideal life, clearly lead to the conclusion that the Gurus envisage, at all stages, an active and altruistic life for the mystic. Consequently, the ideal of personal merger would be quite incongruous with the views of the Gurus and with the difined role of the *Gurmukh*.

(iii) In the hymns of Cosmography, the superman's presence is limited only to the Region of Creativity. He is not mentioned as present in *Sachkhand*, nor as having merged in God. On the other hand, he is symbolically depicted as a separate being adorning His Court. It is specifically stated that he has an entity, is ever in bliss and never dies.

(iv) Merger of the superman in God would inevitably involve the cessation and re-absorption of the Will of God in relation to the superman. This would virtually be a request for winding up all God's creative activity. The Gurus' God is Creative and Benevolent. He wants His superman to be the instrument of His Will and of His Progressive Creativity. Therefore, the Gurus' language being symbolic, merger can never mean the fusion or loss of identity of the superman. The ideal of simple merger or *Nirvana* cannot lead to the service of God. It would rather be an anti-creative annihilation or spiritual suicide almost egoistic in its content.

(v) The ideal of merger in God would be quite foreign to a monotheistic creed like Sikhism which, in all its aspects, is anti-pantheistic, and places on the individual the responsibility of taking up God-centred activity instead of self-centred indulgence. "Harmony with the Will of God does not mean absorption into it but free cooperation with it. Our wills are ours to make them Thine." In other words, "identification with the Divine Will on man's part really

signifies an act of faith and freedom by which he makes the Divine End, his own end; it is not the recognition of the actual identity of his will with God's Will,"[20] writes Galloway.

(vi) The Gurus have strongly repudiated the theory of incarnation. To say that man merges in God is clearly to accept the fact of incarnation. For, by merger the superman loses his own identity and becomes an unidentifiable part of God. There is no difference between the two statements that man merges in God and that God takes the human form. It just means that transformation can take place both ways. Hence, the Gurus' emphatic denouncement of the theory of *Avtarhood*. For, it gives man and God equal status and is pantheistic. In fact, the merger of the living mystic in God, and thereby the loss of his identity, would be a virtual denial of Sikhism being monotheistic. Most of the *Guru Granth* is in the form of humble and devotional prayers to God by the Gurus. Had they been merged in God, and become identical with Him, the question of any prayer to God would not arise, because prayer is always between the two, the devotee and God. It is not an auto-suggestion. Besides, the idea of the superman's merger in God would raise the concept of a God ever-growing in size by the addition of the merged persons. Such a concept of a changing God would be contrary to the very definition of God.

(vii) On the supposition that the living mystic is a merged person, another incongruity would arise. After his physical death, his identity would be completely lost in God. This raises a problem. It means that the stage of merger after death is a higher stage than the so-called merger in life. In fact, it implies the stand of those mystic systems under which salvation is possible only after death and not in life, or of those who believe that after *Moksha* in life, the remaining life of the mystic is like the movement of the potter's wheel when the hand of the potter has been removed. This is something entirely opposed to Sikh mysticism, where the role of the mystic is a life of continued and unbroken service of God's Will.

We should like to explain that the use of the word link or union with God in order to indicate the final stage of the mystic, is purely a symbolic description. By its very nature, it suggests only

a relation between man and God. It does not seek to define it specifically, nor have the words union or link been used in any empirical or metaphysical sense. The serious objection to the use of the concept of merger, as made by the Gurus themselves in rejecting the doctrine of incarnation, is that at no stage, God and man are identical ontologically. We have no desire to enter into a discussion of philosophical or psychological issues. But, the use of the word merger has some drawbacks and raises philosophical issues which we have deliberately tried to avoid. First, the concept of merger involves a clear pantheistic connotation which has been repudiated already. Secondly, it would create unnecessary confusion instead of clarifying the issue and the concepts. It is really beyond the scope of a descriptive theological statement like ours to consider metaphysical and psychological issues raised by Russell, Kaufman, Stace, Hocking, Leube and James. That would only create an avoidable controversy and ambiguity. Thirdly, it is, in fact, such loose descriptions, as the one implied by the word 'merger' in the present case, that have unnecessarily created considerable confusion about the statements of mystics like Eckhart and Hallaj, leading to the indictment and condemnation of the former and execution of the latter. And despite the spirited defence of his true position by Eckhart himself, and the justification of Hallaj by the great Al Ghazali, the prejudice against these mystics continues and their reputations have not been fully retrieved.

We have, therefore, only used the word link or union to describe pragamatically and symbolically the relation between God and the mystic. We should, however, state that this relation is not temporary but is abiding. "I am in love with my Lord. This love permeates my whole being. Nothing can break or effect the bonds of my love with Him. By His Grace He pervades the mind, day and night."[21] "Now I am secure at my destination. There it is everlasting peace. This sovereignty is permanent. Save the Lord, there is none else."[22]

We wish to stress that in the mystic union there is a relation between the mystic and God. This relation is certainly not one of identity, since oneness involves no experience or condition and no relationship whatsoever. In this context, the use of the word merger in the sense of loss of identity would be highly inappropriate and untrue to the real position. The nearest symbolic approximation to describe this relationship between God and the mystic would be of union, link or his being God's agent or instrument.

3. GURMUKH

The Gurus have praised no one in terms more glorious than the God-centred person, the *Gurmukh*. Their description of the mystic by itself gives a concise picture of their concepts about the goal of man, the ideal life, their value system and their entire approach to the world and to life.

Practically most of the features of the *Gurmukh* have already been indicated. Here we should like to state them so as to enable us to see at one glance the salient characteristics and role of the superman.

(a) He is godly, and has all virtues and no Haumen : The mystic is free from *Haumen* and all the vices, insecurity and problems that ego creates. He sheds duality, "He who knows His Will, his ego goes."[23] God is truth but the superman lives Truth. God is the Ocean of Virtues. The superman translates these virtues in life and lives them. "He (*Gurmukh*) is the ocean of virtues, pure and truthful." "He deals in the virtues of God."[24] He is the "shelter of the shelterless."[25] "God is Compassionate, Merciful and Mainstay of the earth; and so is the nature of saints."[26] The *Gurmukh* "saves everyone and removes pain;"[27] "he becomes like Him with whom imbued;" "by serving God one becomes like God."[28] He is like God, but he is not God. His "intuition is awakened, evil is turned to good and gone is the noise of reason and self will."[29] It is worth noting that, compared to the mystic intuition, the Guru calls the logic of reason as mere noise. "He lives truth; he loves singlemindedly."[30] He sees God in all hearts; "he treates all alike."[31] His is not a conditioned, calculated or a rationalised practice of virtues. But, "he practices good spontaneously; he is the fountain spring of benevolence."[32]

(b) He carries out His Will : God has a Will. The superman (*Gurmukh*) carries out that Will. His mind is filled with *Naam*; "true mind is imbued with the Word, serves truth, practices truth and earns truth."[33] *Naam*, Word and Will are God's Immanence. These quotations show that it is with these qualities of mind and heart that the God-centred man is filled, saturated and charged. "Imbued by His Will, he carries it out." "The soldiers of God act as He Wills."[34] "Wonderful is His Will; if one walks in His Will, then one knows how to lead the life of truth."[35] This point is of fundamental importance, namely, that he who carries out His Will alone knows it; and he who knows it must carry it out. The two activities are not separate but simultaneous because a Will known is essentially

a Will carried out. "They who know His Will carry it out."[36]

(c) He is the servant of God and man : The aim of the mystic is to be the servant of God and man. They "dedicate life to Him."[37] He is "a combatant in the cause of God."[38] He is "His pedlar," "His instrument," "He is the servant of God."[39] The Guru calls himself as "the slave of all creation."[40] The Guru prays : "the world is sick, O God, save it by any mean you may be gracious to do."[41]

This is a prayer of catholic import. He prays for all men and not for a few persons here or there. The Guru is deeply moved to witness the troubles of man. Hence his prayer. He does not want God to help men only through him. The Guru has made no claim to exclusive prophethood. He wants everyone to be saved by any means God may be pleased to use. Nothing could be more expressive of the anonymity and humility of the Guru and his deep extrovert concern for man and his problems.

(d) *He partakes actively in all fields of life* : God, the source of all values and virtues, "is milk to the child, staff to the blind and help to the poor, and is protector of the weak." It is important to understand that the mystic's virtues are not merely personal, pious and preparatory, meant to secure salvation for himself. But his role is positive and dynamic *vis* a *vis* vice, evil and human problems in all fields. He compromises not with evil, nor yields to it. "God's hero is he who fights for the oppressed."[42]

(e) He aims to make all others God-centred : There is another important feature of the mystic. "He unites himself with God and unites others too with Him;" "The servants of God salvage all." "He is emancipated and emancipates others."[43] "I am sacrifice to him who sees Him and makes others see." In the Guru's system, the ideal to make everyone a superman remains the foremost aim of the mystic. This priority, therefore, becomes the very reason why the mystic deals with all men and participates in all fields and aspects of life. The emphasis on this ideal of making everyone God-centred is so great that the Guru goes to the extent of saying that "God established the earth for the sake of God-centred persons."[44] This, in essence, means that the creation or evolution of the superman on earth is the purpose of God towards which all life is moving.

19

Gurus Prophetic Communion With God

In Sikh mysticism, communion with God is the hallmark of the mystic of *Gurmukh*. Persons who lack faith in the development of the mystic intuition believe that such descriptions only refer to a heightened moral sense in a person and not to any spiritual experience. But the Guru's hymns in this regard are clear and categoric. They are not merely metaphoric or symbolic descriptions. They have made emphatic statements that their mission is God-ordained. "I salute the Primeval Lord who is my Enlightener." "My Enlightener is the External Lord."[1] "I relate, O Lalo, as the Lord's words come to me."[2] "Nanak speaks the word of Truth (God)."[3] "I speak what I am commanded to say."[4] "The words of Guru should be accepted as true, I speak what He makes me say."[5] "Wonderful are the words of the Lord; that truth has emanated from God."[6] "These words have been spoken by Him who created the world."[7] "I am in such perfect union with God that it can never break. I am in sublime bliss."[8] I am wedded to the Lord. "His Light and wisdom pervade my mind, dispelling all ignorance."[9] "As the lamp lights the darkness, as the bride is in joy on meeting her Lord, so my mind is in bliss on being saturated with God."[10] "My mind is illumined, the egg of superstition has burst, my fetters have been broken and I am freed."[11] "By this perfect union with God, I am ever in bliss."[12] "My longing has been fulfilled, I am one ever in union with my Lord. He abides in the temple of my mind."[13] "My father has manifested himself in me. The father and the son are now united in partnership. Both are imbued with the same love."[14]

We have already noted that extreme humility is the dominant tone of all the Gurus' hymns. Everywhere, in comparison to God and even to others, they speak of themselves as the lowliest of the low. "The servant of all creation."

20

The Discipline

The Gurus have prescribed three principal modes of discipline for the seeker : (a) Company of a God-centred person, (b) moral life or service of man, and (c) prayer and remembering God. These modes of training are not ascetic methods, but lay down a code of conduct to be practised throughout the entire course of one's life.

Company of God-centred Persons

The Gurus have paid glowing tributes to the superman. Obviously, the society of the ideal man is of inestimable value for the training of the seeker, both as a model and as a guide. His influence is the best for shaping man's growing personality and providing him strength and direction in times of stress and strain. "Just as the *Harind* (Castor plant) imbibes the fragrance of the *Chandan* tree, the fallen are emancipated by the saints."[1] "Near the God-conscious, the evil-doer benefits."[2] "In good company we become true and develop love for *Naam.*" "In good company one becomes good."[3] It is the role of the mystic to help everyman to be a God-centred person. The seeker thus grows in a receptive and kindly atmosphere because "God sends saints to reveal God's nearness to man."[4]

Moral Life and Service

In the Gurus' system, moral and spiritual values are for the enrichment of the world. Spiritual discipline aims at enabling man to face life in a righteous way and to accept the responsibilities of a creative life. As such, a householder's life is an essential moral responsibility of man. The seeker's training has to take place during the course of normal life and not in a monastery. The psyche can be properly conditioned only when it is subject to the stresses and strains of the social environment of man. No one can learn to swim outside the pool. This is exactly the reason that the Gurus excluded

ascetics from the Sikh fold and condemned all ritualistic, yogic and other-worldly practices and austerities. For, moral disciplining can alone be the foundation of spiritual growth.

A natural question arises, whether to be moral is to be a mystic. The answer obviously is the negative. A moral man is not necessarily a mystic; but a mystic must be actively moral. Let us explain it. Altruism is opposed to all the biological, instinctive and rational urges and aspirations of a normal man. It is of the contrast between this normal behaviour of man and of the mystic altruism that Bergson wrote, "would the philosophers themselves have laid down so confidently the principle, so little in keeping with everyday experience, of an equal participation of all men in a higher essence, if there had not been mystics to embrace all humanity in one simple indivisible love."[5] Virtues have come to occupy a certain amount of cultural respect and prestige. Men practise them not because it is in their nature to do so, but because their sense of pride is served by such a performance. It is not a cynical statement, but represents the biological state of man. It goes to the credit of cultures, and more so to the appearance of mystics from time to time, that, during their growth, the egoistic or the power instinct of man gets conditioned to the practice of virtues. It is not a constitutional change in man but it is the mere conditioning of the egoistic psyche to moral ends. But, as it is not a change in the guiding consciousness of man, ego satisfaction remains the underlying motive of human activity. In this state, the base of moral life remains shaky and search for moral ends is just temporary. We are not questioning the validity or superiority of the moral life, we are only indicating its constitutional weakness. The way out is to develop a higher consciousness. "God created individuation and ego."[6] "God created first Himself, then *Haumen*, third *Maya* and the fourth state of poise and bliss."[7] One has to rise to this fourth stage of supermanhood. Keeping in view the character and role of the superman it is obvious that progress is possible only through moral life. "Singing and dancing in ecstasy are no worship; love and the giving up of ego are the way of real worship";[8] "drive out selfishness and one is fulfilled"[9]; "without deed there is no hope,"[10] "where the weak are cared, there is showered God's mercy";[11] "attain God through conduct";[12] "practice virtue and not vice, nor gamble away human life;" "evil separates, good deeds unite";[13] "service in the world is the way to be fulfilled."[14] There is, indeed, no spiritual progress without active moral functioning. The service of God is a synonymn for the service

of man. Altruistic and moral activities have the highest priority in the discipline of the seeker. The demands of moral life invite the greatest of sacrifices. But, this service or moral life has no reference to service in temples or monasteries, or to some prescribed acts of piety.

In Sikhism, God-centred activity and not salvation is the goal. In Sikh tradition, from the very time of the Gurus, the word *Mukti* or salvation is used for a moral act involving the sacrifice of life. It is in this tradition that the forty Sikhs who sacrificed their lives at *Chamkaur Sahib* are called *Muktas.* When besieged by thousands of the imperial troops, they fought to the last man without surrendering. Similarly, the forty who fell at *Muktasar* are also called *Muktas.* This batch of Sikhs, when faced with the hordes of the Moghul army, tried neither to flee nor to escape in the adjacent jungle area. They fought and fell to the last man. Baba Wasakha Singh was a recent Sikh mystic whose views on mysticism we shall record separately. When the news of the execution of the three patriots, Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and **Sukhdev** was conveyed to him, he uttered spontaneously, 'they have become *Mukta.*' These examples explain two points about the meaning and status of moral life in Sikh mysticism. First, they emphasise that moral life is the same as spiritual life. Secondly, they show that activity in any sphere of life, whether political or the rest, is moral provided it measures upto the standard of Sikh ethics, namely, a unitary view of life.

This is also the reason that the use of human rationality and a sense of discrimination (*Bibek Budhi*) have a distinct place in moral life. Man's faculty of reason is without doubt an asset which other animals do not possess. In Sikh theology non-deterministic as it is, man has a distinct moral freedom and responsibility in the choice of his actions. It is this exercise of right choice that determines his spiritual progress. "By use of discrimination or intellect one serves God. By discrimination one is honoured. By intellect and study one understands things. It is the sense of discrimination that makes one charitable. This is the right way, rest is all wrong."[15] "Man is blessed with the light of reason and discrimination."[16] "One, in fear of God and discriminating between good and bad, appears sweet to God."[17] It is a part of the spiritual life of the mystic to make the world more harmonious, beautiful and moral. In order to secure this development, all tools including that of human rationality, have to be used. Available instruments and institutions have to be employed and new ones created for the purpose of the moral life and the service of man. God's interest

in the moral development of man can be understood from the fact that He takes cognizance of and "rewards even an iota of good deeds," it being "His innermost nature to help the erring."[18] "With self-control and discipline, we forsake vice and see the miracle of man becoming God."[19] "He who controls evil propensities becomes a perfect man."[20] "Control cravings and the light of wisdom will dawn; then fashion this wisdom into deeds."[21] "Continue to work with your limbs and at the same time remain attuned to God."[22] "Salvation is attained while laughing, playing and living a full life."[23]

For the moral life of man two virtues, namely, humility and love, find the highest priority in the Gurus' ethical system and the discipline prescribed for the seeker. We shall amplify this point while considering the subject of ethics.

Remembering God and Prayer

In the *Guru Granth* there is considerable emphasis on remembering *Naam* (*Naam Japna*) and praise of God (*Sift Salaah*). But, there is some misunderstanding as to what constitutes the remembering of *Naam*. Some persons contend that the remembering of God is by itself enough to link oneself with Him. This contemplation is sometimes also understood to mean yogic practices for the achievement of the so-called bliss as an end in itself. We are unaware of any hymn in the *Guru Granth* recommending such yogic practices or any tradition in this regard. Nor are we aware of any hymn in the *Guru Granth* which, apart from recommending prayer and keeping the fear of God always in one's mind, directs the practice of day long meditations in seclusion and away from the day's duties and moral responsibilities of man. On the contrary, there are hymns against the use of such a course as a means to spiritual advancement. "Everyone repeats God's name, but such repetition is not the way to God."[24] "With guile in heart, he practices guile but mutters God's name. He is pounding husk and is in darkness and pain."[25] "One mutters God's name, but does evil daily, in this way the heart is not purified."[26] These verses deny the utility of any mechanical means of worship or mere repetition of words or hymns. The important thing is the motive for remembering God and singing His praise. Real praise involves admiration, love and devotion, accompanied by an honest desire to follow, as an ideal, the qualities of one who is praised. Such praise is really the expression of an humble desire to move in the direction of the ideal. Praise, thus, is a spontaneous acknowledgement of the Glory of God and the desire to please

Him, not by mere words but by virtuous deeds. Remembrance or repetitive utterances can be mechanical, magical, or ritualistic in nature. As against it, remembering can be a way to keep in mind one's basic ideals so that the frail human psyche does not falter or deviate from one's direction and ideals. That is why, in the hymns of the *Guru Granth*, the stress is not on any mechanical repetition. The words used for the purpose are like, '*Naam*' living in one's consciousness, (*Naam Vasei* or *Kare Nivaas*) 'enlightening one's being' (*Kare Pargaas*), 'Being imbued' (*Ratte*). This remembrance is like keeping the fear of God in one's mind while embarking on any activity or making any decision. It is not an end in itself, and seeks no magical or compulsive effects. Just as in the case of 'doing the Will of God' and 'being yoked to *Naam*,' 'remembering' is also linked with the subsequent decisions to be made. 'By dwelling on the Word, the mind flows to serve others."[27] Evidently, remembrance of God is kind of preparation for the virtuous activities to be undertaken in life. It is actually the character of the subsequent deeds that will be the test of the man and the preparation he has made for his moral and spiritual progress.

Prayer

Prayer, as in any other theistic system, finds a place of eminence in the *Guru Granth*. Prayer has a triple function. Prayer, on the one hand, expresses the humility and insignificance of the devotee. On the other hand, it **reminds** man of his need of continuous search for God and His Lofty Greatness. Secondly, it represents a perpetual seeking for His Grace which is purely an act of God. Finally, it is a humble attempt at communication with God so as to draw upon His Light and Energy in order to lift and elevate oneself and restore one's sagging energies in the fight against evil and for the positive expression of love. "My energies are exhausted and I am helpless. But O' God, with Thy Grace nothing is difficult for me to accomplish." Such a prayer is not a repetitive formula or practice, nor is it an end in itself. It is really a preparation for the moral activity to be undertaken in the world. In fact, it is in alienably linked with that activity. Iqbal feels that prayer is part of an activity, prayer being the internal component of which the visible deed is the external continuation. Like thought, it is a part of the act. In the Guru's system, while prayer has a fundamental value, it is also, like knowing God's Will, an integral part of the creative deed. Prayer that leads to no activity is no prayer

at all. In this sense prayer is an internal urge or act, the essential part of which is the external creative expression in life. Without its external operation, the internal activity remains stillborn and invalid. For, according to the Gurus, mysticism is activity. The value of prayer both as a morning meditation and otherwise is recognized. Actually, the Gurus enjoin regular prayers. The method of congregational prayer and singing, as a mode of moral preparation, was started by the Gurus. It has continued as such till today. The very fact that the Gurus started no monastic system shows conclusively that they never advocated prayer as an independent mode of spiritual training. "One is emancipated while laughing and playing in life." "The God-centred lives truth while a house-holder."[28]

21

Ethics

We have already given expression to many of the ideas which form the basis of the ethics advocated by the Gurus and the place of moral life for the spiritual growth of man. Before we proceed further we shall briefly recapitulate the principles of Sikh ethics.

1. PRINCIPLES

(a) God is the Creator. We are all His children, equal in His Eye. This lays the basis for human brotherhood and the equality of man.

(b) The world is real. It is not a vale of tears or a bondage. The object of life is not to secure release from it but to strive towards the goal of a truly moral or spiritual living, and to work so as to sustain life.

(c) God, as the Ocean of Attributes and Values, is carrying out a progressive movement from comparative imperfection to comparative perfection and towards a world of harmony in which all beings are treated alike and as equals. It is a development for the growth of values. Simultaneously, it is a movement from comparative necessity to freedom, from being the helpless object of the laws of causality and determinism towards being a free and responsible centre of creative activity.

(d) *Haumen* of man obstructs his vision in seeing things in their true colour and perspective and in realising the underlying unity and brotherhood of man. It is the fundamental failing of man. Practically, all manifestations of this vice involve encroachment on the rights of one's fellow beings. All social vices results from it. As against it, God-consciousness is the greatest social virtue, since it directs every activity towards the good of all and not towards self-interest alone. This brings out the basically social character and approach of Sikhism. It explains the

social trends of its ethics and the social concern of its institutions and traditions. All vices involving aggression against the rights, liberties and well-being of one's fellow beings and life have to be avoided. All virtues flowing from the idea of the brotherhood of man and protecting and securing the equal rights of all have to be practised.

We find that all these four ideas are not only interconnected and supplementary, but they represent only the different facets of a single integrated concept.

2. STANDARD

The standard of Gurus' ethics is a unitary view of life, in which life has to be sustained all beings have to be treated as equals, and evil has to be fought against. God's soldiers try to be like Him and fight evil. Human actions have to be judged by this standard. We may also call this ethics as the ethics of *Naam*.

Let us here clarify a related issue. A moral act has always two aspects, one internal and the other external. The internal aspect has a two-fold implication. One is the conditioning of the psyche in a manner that it tends towards the performance of good deeds. Secondly, it helps in bringing about a constitutional change for the development of a higher consciousness so that good deeds become the spontaneous urge of the human personality. External activities too have a two-fold impact. The first effect of a moral deed is the conditioning of the psyche it does in the case of others. The second part of the impact is that a deed is in itself good or constructive either directly or indirectly. Accordingly, moral acts are of two kinds; first, those that are good in themselves, and, second those that may seem to be destructive but seek to change the environment so that the performance or fulfilment of constructive deeds is thereby facilitated. This apparently destructive aspect of such good deeds raises the second question, namely, of the means permissible for the removal of evil growths in the environment that hinder the harmonious and creative flow of life.

On this issue of means, spiritual systems may be divided into three categories. The first category, like Jainism, Sankhya, and Yoga, believes that social or moral life has no meaning. All spiritual effort should be directed inwards. Some preparatory and pious acts may be done; but the aim should be to withdraw from life and seek an ultimate change in the makeup of man. In these systems socio-moral life *per se* has no significance. Social morality and the

change of environment for social ends are practically excluded. To the second category belong spiritual systems like Buddhism. They too are virtually disinterested in changing the environment in order to serve social objectives. All the same, for the layman and the seeker, they prescribe moral laws and duties. But, at the same time, they impose certain limitations on the means that can be employed for a moral end.

Sikhism does not belong to either of these two categories. It clearly contemplates the moulding of the environment for achieving moral and social aims. In any system, where moral life has an independent validity and an importance of its own as a desirable end, the bringing about of environmental, organisational and constitutional changes in order to achieve a moral effect would *ipso facto* be justified. The standard is the unity of life and to treat all as equals. Every act that satisfies this standard is moral.

The Gurus contemplate that life should be organised and the environment changed so that the growth of moral life is promoted. It is logically impossible to construct anything without, at the same time, destroying and remoulding the existing environment. Human reason and intellect, we know, can be used both for good and evil. Similarly, force too can be used for beneficial and for destructive purposes. Man has the option to use reason and force for right or wrong objectives. Actually, it is the way one exercises this discretion that becomes the basis of moral judgement. God has been defined not only as a Helper of the weak, but also as the Destroyer of the tyrant and the oppressor."[1]

The Gurus clearly deprecate evil and oppressive institutions. In the social field caste prejudices have been severally criticised since they form the basis of discrimination between man and man. In the field of politics, the oppression of the rulers, the tyranny of the invaders and the corruption of the officials have been condemned. Similarly, the pseudo religious practices and idleness of Yogis and ascetics and the hypocrisy of priests and Brahmins have been exposed. The latter pretend not to take polluted food during the day but suck the blood of man at night.[2] The amassing of wealth and property has been denounced by saying that wealth or property cannot be accumulated without resort to evil means.

This criticism of the evil institutions of man, both social and political, is not a mere verbal exercise. It evidently implies that the Gurus contemplate and suggest the re-construction and creation of alternative moral institutions. Naturally, new human institutions can come up only by the substitution, remoulding or destruction

of the old and oppresive organisations. The lives of the Gurus are a clear pointer that, in their system, change of environment to improve the moral climate in all fields is clearly envisaged and sanctioned.

Let us attempt to explain the rationale of this view. For the Gurus, the course of spiritual path involves the performance of righteous deeds.

The next question is what is right and what is wrong. Naturally, it has to be judged by the standard of Sikh ethics. The Gurus say that God-consciousness consists in treating all as equals. "God's riches are for all men but men try to grab them for themselves." Hence inequality in treatment, including arbitrary distribution in wealth, is immoral. Any encroachment on the rights of others or any infringement of the spiritual law is immoral. Just as all property is theft, every encroachment on the rights of others is aggression or violence. It is inherently impossible being contrary to the very law of physics, that violence or aggression can be undone or resisted without an equal and opposite use of force. In the world of God all progress has been made only through the use of force. All progress is change. And no change is possible without the necessary force to impel or cause it. As such, all action and activity, howsoever good, involve the use of force because action and force are synonymous. Action not involving the use of force is a contradiction in terms. To call any activity as involving the use or non-use of force is purely the expression of an arbitrary or relative point of view of the person concerned. In the system of the Gurus, so long as the end is spiritual and not self-centred, the use of necessary force is justified. The Gurus prescribe no shackles or limitations as to the means to be employed. Obviously, means should not be such as should defeat the very object aimed at. But to raise the means to the level of the end itself is certainly barred, being incongruous. "Men discriminate not and quarrel over meat-eating. They know not what is flesh and what is non-flesh, and what constitutes sin."[3] This verse clearly implies that so long as one lives in the midst of social life, any arbitrary prejudices about meat-eating or violence being evil, are as such unjustified. Life is dynamic and involves at every step the use of force. The basis of all form is force, and, consequently, of all becoming and progress. It would, therefore, be mere sophistry and sheer ignorance of reality to talk of performing a righteous or moral act without the use of force of one kind or the other.

In a few hymns,[4] Guru Nanak has expressed in detail his

views concerning the issue of means and the cant about meat-eating. He chides the Brahmins not only for their pretence about meat-eating, but also for their considering some acts of supposed pollution as sinful and impure. The Guru describes how the ways and processes of life involve the transformation and the use of flesh. He further explains that life is present in every grain of our food and even in the firewood and the cowdung which the Brahmins use for the purposes of purification. The Guru exposes the fallacy that life is possible without the use of force or killing. He means that immorality does not lie in the use of force, which is inevitable for all living, whether moral or immoral, but it lies in the direction or the purpose for which force is used. Force used for a good purpose is moral. This clarifies the problem of means and related moral issues. Every activity has to be judged on the basis of the principles and the standard of Sikh ethics. So long as human action measures up to these two yardsticks, the use of force is not barred.

It is necessary to record a few words about the five categories of evil manifestation of *Haumen*, namely, lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride. The mention of these five evils is nothing new. As such it might be argued that the *Guru Granth* emphasises just a sense of piety and virtuous living which is common to all salvation religions, and that there is nothing in it to suggest a comprehensive growth of social ethics. But such an argument would not be valid. It has already been substantiated that to see God in all hearts and to treat all men as equals is the ideal and also the basis of Sikh ethics. But as this ideal can be achieved only by right living, there has to be a distinct orientation and education in creating new attitudes towards social life and the physical world. In this context the Gurus have pointed out the institutional and other social manifestations of these evils. It is this social aspect which is important. It would be pertinent to give a broad indication of their views in this regard.

The Social Aspect

The caste system and the resultant institutions of extreme inequality or segregation and notions of pollution rigidly governed the entire social, economic and political life in the country. Similarly inequality of sexes had also received religious sanction. The Gurus criticised and condemned these distinctions. "The *Vedas* make a wrong distinction of caste."[5] "No one should take pride in caste; O, foolish man be not proud of caste; this pride leads to

multifarious evils. They make distinctions of four castes, but all are born of God." "The whole world is made of the same elements. Then why make distinctions."[6] "They talk of pollution and warn others not to touch their food lest it should be defiled. But their own bodies are impure."[7] "Why call women impure when without woman there would be none."[8]

Next comes the question of economic inequality. This too has been criticised by the Gurus. "God's bounty belongs to all, but in the world it is maldistributed."[9] "Man gathers riches by making others miserable."[10] "Riches cannot be gathered without sin and these do not keep company after death."[11]

The Gurus denounce every kind of renunciation of the world. They commend honest work and the production of goods as the moral and spiritual duty of man. "O Yogi, are you not ashamed of begging from door to door for your food ?"[12] "The man incapable of earning a living gets his ears split (to become a Yogi) or becomes a mendicant. He calls himself a Guru or saint but begs for food from door to door. Never look upto such a person or touch his feet. He knows the right way who earns his living by hard work and shares his earning with others."[13] This emphasises fair distribution of wealth.

The Gurus felt that fear, hypocrisy, ritualism, caste distinctions, other-worldliness and parasitic living were evils that sat into the vitals of social life. In regard to all of them an attempt was made to remould individual attitudes so as to enable men, in pursuit of their ideals, to face and re-shape their life boldly and develop the capacity to react against social and political wrongs.

Humility and Love

A study of the *Guru Granth* indicates that in the Gurus' ethical system two virtues have the highest importance. The first is humility. It is a virtue which is the moral antidote of egoism. All the hymns of the Gurus are marked by a deep sense of humility. This virtue has received the first priority in their ethical system. For, them pride and egoism are the root of all self-centredness. "He who forsakes pride in the company of saints, is the best of all men. He who regards himself as low is the highest of all."[14] "On whom God bestows humility, is *Mukta* in this world and is happy in the next."[15] "Humility is my mace and to be the dust of all is my smitter. No evil can stand against it."[16]

Just as humility is the greatest shield against the internal attacks of the ego, love is the highest virtue expressing the

sublimest urge both of man and the mystic. Love is not only the external expression of the deep-felt human recognition of the unity of life and the brotherhood of man, but it is also the all-embracing free and creative human activity. In Sikhism, no activity is so characteristic of the mystic achievement as love. On the one hand, it drives out all egoistic tendencies by the very profuseness of its impact. On the other hand, it creates and constructs life and roots out evil by the very dynamism of its flow. Love is sublime in the case of man and divine in the case of the mystic. For, in the latter's case, it represents the blessing of God's Love of man. It is for this reason that while describing the mystic in symbolic terms, the Gurus say that he is like God. "He who loves finds God."[17] It is love that demands the highest sacrifices. Guru Nanak proclaims, "He who wants to play the game of love should come with his head on his palm."[18] "He who loves meets God." "I fear not if my body is torn to bits, but I am afraid to lose Thy love."[19] "May my love of God never weaken in me, for I have attained it at the risk of my life. Without the company of saints this love is not born. Without love there can be no worship of God."[20] All meditations, disciplines, pleasure, reputation and pride, *Musan*, I should sacrifice this again and again for a moment of love."[21]

The emphasis on these two virtues has great significance. For, humility and love are the chief characteristics of God-consciousness. Love is a virtue that embraces, without distinction, all men within its fold. It is both divine and dynamic. Whereas humility is a virtue that eliminates the exhibition of ego and love is a positive, cohesive and constructive expression of God-consciousness. In fact, humility and love are twin virtues. They are intimately connected and are, in a way, overlapping. And, yet, there is a marked distinction between them. Humility is human. It is the hallmark of the mystic and man *vis a vis* God and His universe. It marks man's creature-like character. But, love is divine. It is God's most comprehensive Attribute. Love in man is God's gift to him. It is a part of His reflected Glory and Image, an expression of His life in man. Hence the eminence of these two virtues in the Gurus' ethical system.

22

The Khands

The hymns of *Khands* in the *Japji* of Guru Nanak deal with an important theological aspect of Sikh mysticism. Unfortunately, there is, among commentators, far from unanimity on the interpretation of these hymns. Since they have a bearing on the subject under discussion, it is necessary to study them in some detail. Broadly, we accept the view that these hymns deal with Sikh cosmography. When translated, the hymns read somewhat as follows.

> In the midst of atmosphere, water, fire, nether regions, nights, seasons, dates and days, the earth has been established as a place for the practice of righteousness. Here live innumerable forms of life with different characteristics.
>
> Here everyone is judged according to the merit of his deeds, True is He,True is His Court of judgement. The approved ones adorn it. The mark of final approval is given only by His Grace. There alone is the merit of each rightly assessed. Nanak, on going there the worth of each becomes known.
>
> This is the characteristic of the realm of Righteousness. Let the features of the region of knowledge be stated. Numerous are the winds, waters and fires; numerous are Krishnas and Sivas; numerous Brahmas are fashioning shapes of different forms and colours. Numerous are the fields of activity, mountains and the guiding polar-stars. Numerous are Indras, moons, suns and stellar regions. Numerous are *Siddhas*, Buddhas and *Naths* and goddesses. Numerous are gods, demons and sages, and the precious products of the seas. Numerous are sources of life, forms of speech, kings and emperors. Nanak, numerous are those who serve and contemplate Him; there is no end to His creation.
>
> In this region, knowledge is supreme. There is music, joy, sights and scenes.

In the region of construction, the medium of expression is form. Beautiful are the forms fashioned there. It is not possible to express them. One would only regret it if one attempted to do so. There is fashioned consciousness, intellect, will and discernment. There is shaped the sense of perception of angels and *Siddhas*.

In the realm of creativity, power or force is the medium of expression. Nothing else is there. There are mighty and powerful beings. They are full of God. They are intertwined with His love. It is impossible to tell of their glorious beauty. They cannot be misled nor perish, for God dwells in them. There live the *Bhagats*; their minds are in godly bliss.

In the domain of Truth is God. He is ever-creative and watchful and bestows His Grace. Endless and indescribable are His realms, regions and worlds. In all the spheres are forms; here everything is created and happens as He Wills. He looks at all that, is pleased with it and deliberates about it. Nanak, it is hard as steel to describe it."[1]

It is believed that the hymns deal with five regions, namely, the *Dharamkhand, Giankhand, Saramkhand, Karamkhand* and *Sachkhand*.

In the first hymn of *Dharamkhand* is given the description of earth, our planet, which according to the Guru is the place for the practices of righteousness. It is inhabited by different forms and beings. Further, the central idea of the hymn is explained, viz., that in the Court of the True One each being is judged according to his deeds. The insignia of approval is conferred only by God's Grace. The accepted ones look beautiful in His Court. From the viewpoint of man, this hymn contains a very important statement. It relates directly to man's earth which, it is specifically stated, is the realm for the practice of righteousness. It is made clear that with God it is only the good deeds of man that count. Finally, it states another truth of Sikhism, namely, that approval by God is purely an act of Grace. The hymn gives a complete picture of the entire role man is expected to play here and the basis of his acceptance by God's Grace. As an approved entity or being he is described as distinct from God, adorning His Court.

The second hymn portrays the entire universe and gives a detailed description of the endless multiplicity of worlds, stars and realms where creation is going on. There are many forms of life and speech. Numerous Krishnas, Sivas are there. Numerous Brahmas are continuously creating forms and worlds of different

kinds. In the *Giankhand*, in the background of Indian mythological symbols, a broad description of the endless vastness of the universe, the multiplicity of its beings and the happenings therein is given.

The Guru then proceeds to describe the next *Khand*, the *Saramkhand*. The word *Saram* has been translated in different ways. It means effort, or effort at construction. But, Guru Nanak, in order to dispel the possibility of doubt, makes his meaning very explicit. He says the language or medium of expression of *Saramkhand* is form (*Roop*). He adds that in this realm many kinds of lovely forms are created. Here, too, are fashioned consciousness, mind, intellect and discernment, including the highest sense of perception supposed to be possessed by the *Siddhas* (who practice Yoga to develop it). We find that the Guru describes here the formation of the entire universe. It is partly a cosmological statement. Not only is matter a kind of form, but all consciousness, intellect and mind are described as kinds of form. It is significant that here only the modes of form are indicated. There is no reference to the intuition of *Bhagat* which is mentioned in the next hymn. Here the exquisite being with keenest perception is the *Siddha*. He is not a superman, *Bhagat* or a spiritual being, but only an ordinary man with the sharpest faculty of perception. His presence is also mentioned among the multifarious beings described in the *Giankhand*.

Next we come to the realm of power or force. Here, in the very first line of the hymn it is stated that this realm is expressed through the medium of force, power or energy. There is nothing else there, except the mighty *Bhagats* who are permeated with God. They live in resplendent bliss; they cannot be deceived, nor do they die. This hymn emphasises two points; first, that the region is the expression of force or power, and, second, that *Bhagats*, who are saturated with God, have intuitive or mystic access to this realm.

Finally, there is the realm of Truth or God, where God alone abides. He is ever-creating and is casting His benevolent eye on all. His universes and realms are endless and innumerable. Everything happens within the ambit of His Will. He beholds everything, is pleased with His creation and deliberates about it.

The above is substance gives the concepts and meanings of the hymns of the five *Khands*. Of course, all this is just a symbolic description of things, since the Guru says that it is impossible to describe fully the mystic experiences in the normal language. All the same, we find a fairly clear picture of what the Guru means.

Evidently, these *Khands* depict a cosmographic view of the becoming universe and God's relation with it. The first four hymns concern the universe. The fourth hymn explains that the base of everything is creative energy through which the entire cosmos is initiated, expressed and fashioned. The third hymn describes how, after the creative process is initiated, appear the multiplicity of forms, like matter, consciousness, mind, intellect and the keenest sense of perception. The second hymn describes the vastness of the cosmos, filled with a variety of beings, worlds and galaxies where creation is perpetually going on. It is very significant that the first hymn clearly confines itself to our earth alone. It describes our planet and the role man is expected to play in order to receive God's Grace and approval. Mention of the mystics or approved entities is also made in the fourth hymn as the ones filled with God. They never die, nor are they deceived. The intuition or the mystic eye of these beings can survey the entire realm of creation or the cosmographic structure. Finally, Immanent God is described as being perpetually engaged in creative activity. He supervises the worlds with benevolence and is pleased with what He looks upon.

Apart from these hymns being cosmographic, they are very important because they bring out precisely and graphically all the theological fundamentals of Sikhism. The first fundamental is its monotheism. God and the created and becoming universe are two different entities. There is no place where God is not. He creates, deliberates and supervises over His cosmos. He is God of Grace and Benevolence who is interested in and happy with His creation. It is thus a meaningful world. God's separateness is emphasised as God alone lives in the Region of Truth. Not even the *Bhagat* is mentioned as present in that Region. His presence is confined to the cosmos. He is separate from God both as an approved one and as the one filled with God. It does not mean that the Region of Truth is separate from God. It is just a symbolic way of indicating God's Wonderous identity as Wholly Other, Transcendent and yet Immanent everywhere. This leads us to the second basic principle, viz., that the highest mystic is a being distinct from God. The ideal in Sikh mysticism is not merger but to be an approved being. It does not, however, imply that this mystic has no relationship with God. In fact, this relationship with God is the hallmark of his approval. In addition it is stated for our guidance, as indicated in the first hymn and elsewhere, as to what is man's destiny and goal and how these can be achieved. Lastly, there is the description of the approved one or the *Bhagat*. He does not die, which means

that he does not merge in God and lose his identity. He is not misled by worldly temptations and always treads the right path. It thus gives a character and role to the Sikh mystic.

Some critics are of the view that the first four *Khands* indicate the descent of God or the cosmographic expression of His Will, and that, simultaneously, these also express the mystic progress or ascent of man in so far as it provides him, through his mystic vision, a full view and understanding of the entire cosmos and its working, i.e., of His Will. Except in one respect, we should not like to comment on these views about the descent of God or the ascent of man.

We do not believe that the description in the first *Khand* describes a preliminary stage of the development of man. This *Khand* points out the entire path of progress of man until, through righteous deeds and by the Grace of God, he is finally approved. It does not at all mean the stage of conventional morality or the duties of one's station in life. These are concepts found in the Brahmanical literature, based on their scriptural authority, especially concering the caste structure. These ideas are completely foreign to Sikh theology. The Gurus have repudiated all stratification of man and the related laws and codes of conduct. Their system being entirely revolutionary, they do not sanction wholly or partly the *status quo* in the social or the moral world, or in the laws of man. They developed a completely new ethical system with its own standard of judgement. In view of the entire context of Gurus' thought and the clear text of the first *Khand,* we do not subscribe to the view that man's development indicated in this *Khand* depicts a lower or preliminary stage only. In the hymns of *Khands,* the only prescription for the guidance of the seeker is of righteous deeds. It is the sole path by which, by the Grace of God, one can reach the final stage of mystic achievement. We are not aware of any reference in the *Guru Granth* suggesting that mystics are of four levels of development. The Gurus have mentioned only two categories of man, the *Manmukh* (self-centred) and the *Gurumukh* (God-centred). *Gurumukh, Brahm Gyani, Sant* and *Bhagat* have all been described in the same terms and with similar characteristics. Bhai Gurdas describes even Guru Nanak as a *Gurumukh.* And, this stage of final achievement or approval is mentioned in the very first hymn. There is not the least indication that the person whose deeds have been approved by God has yet to rise to higher levels of mystic development. Nor is there any prescription for the other modes of

discipline in order to reach, what are assumed to be, the three higher mystic stages of *Giankhand*, *Saramkhand* and *Karamkhand*. It would, we believe, be quite incongruous to assume that while the Guru has suggested and stressed the discipline of deeds for reaching the first mystic stage, he has given no guidance to the seeker for making higher mystic attainments. On the other hand, at so many places in the *Guru Granth*, it has been emphasised that the path of virtuous deeds is the only discipline acceptable to God. Hence our view that the hymns of *Khands*, while they state some very important principles and concepts of Sikh mysticism, record primarily a cosmographic picture of the universe.

23

Guru

God, who is full of Attributes, is interested and helpful in the progress of man towards his goal. As Guru or Enlightener, God guides and enlightens man on to the right path. In the *Guru Granth*, it has been stated quite a number of times that it is the innate nature of God to help the erring. The Gurus' entire concept of God is of a Benevolent and Gracious Being. It is evidently in this context that in the very opening verse of the *Guru Granth*, Guru Nanak calls God as the Enlightener. Some authors interpret it to mean that it is by the Grace of the Guru that one is enlightened. This raises the question whether the achievement of the mystic height is possible without the intervention of a living Guru. In Sikhism the answer to the question is in the affirmative. The reasons for it are obvious.

According to the Sikh tradition and history, there is no evidence to suggest that, before his enlightenment. Guru Nanak had been disciplined on the mystic path by a known person, much less by a known mystic. He was in the service of a Lodhi ruler when he had his revelation. At that time his only intimate associate was Mardana who later became his disciple. All available writings state, most of them eulogistically, that Guru Nanak was called to his mission by God. At least this is the kind of impression left on all his contemporaries. The first authentic evidence is of hymns recorded by Satta and Balwand and incorporated in the *Guru Granth* by the fifth Guru. "Guru Nanak founded the spiritual kingdom;" and that "it is really the same light (of Guru Nanak) that shines in the subsequent Guru."[1] Bhai Gurdas, the scribe of *Guru Granth*, writes, "When God heard the painful cry of the world, He sent Guru Nanak."[2] This shows that among the later Gurus and among his contemporaries, Guru Nanak was known as the prophet and the direct messenger of God. Any suggestion that Guru Nanak had a living Guru is, evidently, precluded.

Fortunately, for us, in the *Guru Granth* there is a clear

statement by Guru Nanak himself which clinches the issue. It decides what is meant by Guru, in the *Guru Granth*. Generally, in all mystic systems, whether Sufi, Christian or Buddhist, the institution of Guru or the mystic teacher has a distinct place and significance *vis-a-vis* the disciple. In the Indian tradition, too, the necessity of a Guru for guiding the disciple on the mystic path is usually taken for granted. In this background, when Guru Nanak met the Yogis, they asked him a pointed question, "Who is your Guru and whose discipline do you follow ?"[3] The Guru gave a categoric reply, "God (Word or Immanent God) is my Guru and the mind attuned to Him is the disciple."[4] Nothing could be more clear and specific on the issue. It is important to note that this is exactly the message, namely, to establish union with God (*Naam*, Word or Will) or God's Will, that all the Gurus have been preaching to man in order to help him to become a God-conscious person.

The history of prophetic mysticism reveals that prophets always had direct revelation. At least that is the record about Buddha, Christ and Mohammad. By its very nature Guru Nanak's message was new, original and prophetic. This is exactly what he stressed again and again. He left the same impression on his contemporaries. He sang, "I speak as the words of God come to me." "I have said what He commands me to speak." From the above it is obvious that Guru Nanak made it plain that his Guru or Enlightener was God. As such, in all the hymns of Guru Nanak, the word Guru means God, the Enlightener. There are many other verses of Guru Nanak that lead to the same conclusion. "The *Gurumukh* finds Him, without God's (Guru's) Word the mind wavers."[5] "The Transcendent Lord, God, is the Guru whom Nanak has met."[6] "He who does not meet the True Guru (God) is never able to cross the sea of life."[7] "Guru (God) is Omnipotent and Unfathomable. You know the Reality through the service of God."[8] "Except God everyone is fallible."[9] "We meet *Satguru* (God) through the Word."[10]

Accordingly, we have to infer that Guru Nanak had no living Guru and the use of the word Guru in his hymns means God. It would, therefore, be reasonable to assume that in the hymns of his successors the use of the word Guru could not have a different meaning from that of God as conveyed by Guru Nanak.

In fact, it is an important tenet of Sikhism that every *Gurumukh* has link with God. Actually, like Guru Nanak, other Gurus too, had direct communion with God. They say : "Glory be to the words of God, they have emanated from the Perfect

Guru." "Consider the words of Guru as true since it is God himself who has them spoken." "The words I speak are conveyed by Him who created the world."[11]

Further quotations from the hymns of the Gurus also show that by the word Guru, they too mean God. "Listen, the Eternal God Lord is my Guru."[12] "I salute the Primeval Lord, the Guru, who was in the Beginning and before the ages began."[13] "Guru is the Unfathomable, the Creator; He is the Only One : His is the Glory; His Will prevails. He is Transcendent."[14] "Everyone is sick except my Guru (God), the True Lord and Yogi."[15] "My *Satguru* is eternal. He is neither born nor dies."[16] There are a number of other long hymns which leave no doubt that the word Guru refers to God. Guru is described as Transcendent, Timeless One, Creator of Himself, the Formless One, in Primordial Trance, etc.[17] Further, the Guru is called God, Creator, All-Pervading, Working the worlds, and with His Name.[18] Again, Guru is mentioned as God, Transcendent, Incomprehensible, Cause of Causes, Ever-Present, and in like terms.[19]

Apart from the historical and textual evidence, the theological argument is equally overwhelming. The idea of God is central to the mystic system of the Gurus; so is their concept of Attributive God. In the very opening line of the *Guru Granth*, Guru Nanak defines God as the Enlightener. In various symbolic descriptions and doctrines, God's interest in man's progress and His Benificence and Grace have repeatedly been emphasised by the Gurus. Consequently, in the *Guru Granth*, all references to Guru only mean God's Immanence and His attribute as the Enlightener. In this context, it is reasonable to conclude that in the *Guru Granth* the word Guru should normally be taken to mean God. True, there are hymns where the word Guru refers to one of the Sikh Gurus. Actually, in order to arrive at the right interpretation, it is the text of the hymn that is important. But, it is very necessary to stress that there is nothing in the *Guru Granth* to suggest the doctrine that the help of a living Guru is essential to achieve the mystic height. In fact, neither in the *Guru Granth*, nor in the Sikh tradition has anyone other than the ten Masters ever been accepted as a living Guru. This *ipso facto* controverts any suggestion that the assistance of a living Guru is necessary for mystic attainments.

There is another aspect of the matter. The word 'Guru' literally means an enlightener or a teacher. In that sense the word would apply even to a *Gurumukh* or a God-conscious person. He holds a very exalted place in the Sikh mystic system. Not only is he the

highest in God's creation, but, as an instrument of God, he has the essential characteristic, and also the duty, of helping everyone in his progress towards the mystic goal. In this role he too is an enlightener. Naturally, as a teacher of the mystic path, his help and guidance are of the greatest value to the seeker. The company and the influence of the *Gurumukh* have been mentioned as one of the principal modes of mystic training for the seeker. "In saint's company is ego erased; in his company is one enlightened; in his company one realises God's nearness to man; in his company one meets the Unknowable."[20] "In the company of ***Brahm Gyani*** everyone is liberated."[21] "He is Himself emancipated and emancipates others too."[22]

The conclusion is obvious that the intervention of a living Guru is not essential for the mystic achievement. God Himself is the Gracious Enlightener or Guru. But, the help and guidance of a *Gurumukh*, who exhibits in his life all godly qualities, is, indeed, invaluable for the attainment of the mystic goal.

24

Mystic Immortality

The question of immortality has arisen in all religions. Some persons believe that the entire religious search of man is based on his desire for immortality. There is little doubt that in his temporal existence man feels very insecure. As against it, life's fundamental urge is to live and overcome the insecurity and threat to one's existence. Death is the greatest haunting fear of man. Life tries to meet this problem in two ways. It develops the two systems of self-maintenance and reproduction, which are aimed at the continuation of life. In one form or the other, man lives in his progeny. But, this mode of perpetuation by life is inadequate. Fear and death still remain the basic problems of man. In many of their hymns, the Gurus refer to this twin problem of man and suggest the solution of God-consciousness. "He who is in fear of death, should surrender to the saints."[1] "If man remembers God, pain and death do not come near him. If one remembers God, one is not assailed by fear."[2] "He who leans only on God, escapes the noose of death."[3] "The Guru's service gives peace and freedom from insecurity; the cycle of births and deaths is broken and the angel of death is helpless."[4]

The implication of all these verses is that man continues to be the victim of the fear of death and the consequent loss of his identity. The semi-deterministic animal procreation has proved an unsatisfactory device. By God-consciousness and by establishing a relation with God, both these problems of man are solved. He gains a new and higher self-conscious personality and true existence. The mystic has no sense of insecurity. He becomes fearless and remains in poise, harmony and bliss. He does not suffer from any pain, conflicts and frustration. Instead of a small egoistic individuality, he gains a higher supra-conscious personality in harmony with entire life. Death has no dread for him.

This does not mean that the God-conscious person suffers no physical death. But, he lives a conscious life hereafter. This is

what Guru Nanak plainly mentions in the hymn of *Karamkhand*. He says that these *Bhagats* (God-centred persons) are filled with God. They are ever in bliss. They do not die. They understand everything and are misled by none. In short, the Gurus conceive of a conscious individual personality of the God-centred person even after his physical death. "By Guru's Grace they remain in union with God. They do not transmigrate. *Gurumukh* comes and goes (i.e., borns and dies) without any restrictions."[5] "The God-conscious never dies."[6]

It is our view that this immortality or supra-conscious life of the mystic is limited to the cosmos. The mystic is not God. According to the hymn of *Karamkhand*, he is confined to the regions of the cosmos. He was not there when God was by Himself. True, he is the instrument of God. But, he is a created being, not the Creator.

The Sikh mystic, Baba Wasakha Singh, gave the following clarification of the issue. "The mystic is a supra-conscious entity even after life. He enters the world consciously, with a purpose and according to the Will of God." In order to illustrate his point, he gave two similes. "The mystic comes into the world just like the man who enters the well in order to save a drowning person. Viewed externally, both are in the well. One of them is in difficulty, the other has gone on his own with the object of saving the drowning person." That is the comparative position of man and the mystic. One is the helpless victim of circumstances. He feels insecure and is in difficulty. He is anxious about his fate and future. The mystic is faced with no such problem. He comes to the world to carry out His Will. Another simile he gave was that of the prisoners and the jailor. "The liberty of the prisoners stands curtailed. They are bound by their circumstances. They cannot overcome them. The jailor is the master of the situation. He is free to enter the jail and return at his own will. The jailor enters the prison with specific objectives in view and returns after fulfilling them." According to these two similes, the mystic has a supra-conscious status after his physical death. The mystic returns and may return again and again, but he does so with a purpose. He is not the type who merges or who, when once released from the world, never returns.

In Sikhism, God-centredness or the mystic achievement implies not only a continuous creative work in life, but also a supra-conscious immortal personality of the kind envisaged above.

25

The Lives of Gurus[1]

By the very nature of our psyche we can take only a partial, relative and selective view of things and events. That is a human frailty. There will, therefore, always be differences in the interpretation of various hymns in the *Guru Granth* and the system they lay down. But the best way to reduce and eliminate these differences and to clarify the issues is to make a close study of the lives of the Gurus. Evidently their lives are the best interpretation of their hymns. They are the true index to the kind of life they recommend. Conversely, no study of their lives can be fruitful, and no conclusions about them valid, unless seen in the light of their hymns. The right interpretation of the system embodied in the *Guru Granth* is the one illustrated and exemplified by the lives of the Gurus themselves, since their words and deeds match each other.

From the hymns in the *Guru Granth* we have drawn some conclusions on various issues, like, their world-view, the reality of the physical world, the goal of man, the ideal life, the role of the mystic, especially concerning social and political problems, freedom and necessity. The lives of the Gurus will clarify and testify whether the inferences drawn by us are cogent and correct. That is why we are separately studying their lives in order to understand and interpret their views on different aspects of their religion.

We do not propose to write a detailed account of the lives of the Gurus, nor shall we try to evaluate their contribution to history. That is beyond the scope of our study. Our object is to state only those activities which elucidate and illustrate the issues discussed earlier. Secondly, we shall, for obvious reasons, accept facts, views and sources that are authentic. Evidently, contemporary and near contemporary views have a weight of their own. In addition, they furnish a reliable evidence of the image the Gurus left about their views on the contemporary society and on those who came into contact with them.

GURU NANAK (1469-1539)*

Guru Nanak was born in 1469 in Talwandi, a village in the Sheikhupura district, 65 kms west of Lahore. His father was a village official in the local administration. As a boy, Guru Nanak learnt, besides the regional languages, Persian and Arabic. He was married in 1487 and was blessed with two sons, one in 1491 and the second in 1496. In 1485 he took up, at the instance of his brother-in-law, the appointment of an official in-charge of the stores of Daulat Khan Lodhi, the Muslim ruler of the area at Sultanpur. It is there that he formed association with Mardana, a low caste (*Mirasi*) Muslim minstrel who was ten years senior in age.

By all accounts, 1496 was the year of his Enlightenment when he started on his mission. His first statement after his prophetic communion with God was "There is no Hindu, nor any Mussalman." This is an announcement of supreme significance. It declared not only the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God but also his clear and primary interest not in any metaphysical doctrine but only in man and his fate. In addition, it emphasised, simultaneously, the inalienable spirituo-moral combination of his message. Accompanied by Mardana, he began his missionary tours. Apart from conveying his message and rendering help to the weak, he forcefully preached, both by precept and practice, against caste distinctions, ritualism, idol worship and the psuedo-religious beliefs that had no spiritual content. He chose to mix with all. He dines and lived with men of the lowest castes and classes. Considering the then prevailing cultural practices and religious tradition of pollution and untouchability, this was something socially and religiously unheard of in those days of rigid caste system sanctioned by the scriptures. It is a matter of great significance that at the very beginning of his mission, the Guru's first companion was a low-caste Muslim. The offerings he received during his tours, he distributed among the poor. The rest he gave to his hosts to maintain a common kitchen, where all could sit and eat together without any distinction of caste and status. This institution of common kitchen or *Langar* became a major instrument of helping the poor, of levelling up and of establishing the basic equality of all castes, classes and sexes.

Despite the hazards of travel in those times, he performed five long tours all over the country and even outside it. He visited

*The years noted against the name of each Guru relate only to the period of his Guruship.

most of the known religious places and centres of worship. At one time he preferred to dine at the place of a low caste artisan, Bhai Lalo, instead of accepting the invitation of a high caste rich landlord, Malik Bhago, because the latter lived by exploitation of the poor and the former earned his bread by the sweat of his brow. This incident has been depicted by a symbolic representation of the reason for his preference. Guru Nanak pressed in one hand the coarse loaf of bread from Lallo's hut and in the other the food from the Bhago's house. Milk gushed forth from the loaf of Lallo's and blood from the delicacies of Bhago. This prescription for honest work and living and the condemnation of exploitation, coupled with the Guru's dictum that "riches cannot be gathered without sin and evil means," have, from the very beginning, continued to be the basic moral tenet with the Sikh mystics and the Sikh society.

During his tours, he visited numerous places of Hindu and Muslim worship. He explained and exposed through his preachings the incongruities and fruitlessness of ritualistic and ascetic practices. At Hardwar, when he found people throwing Ganges water towards the sun in the east as oblations to their ancestors in heaven, he started, as a measure of correction, throwing the water towards the west, in the direction of his fields in the Punjab. When ridiculed about his folly, he replied, "If Ganges water will reach your ancestors in heaven, why should the water I throw up not reach my fields in the Punjab, which are far less distant ?"

He spent twenty-five years of his life in preaching from place to place. Many of his hymns were composed during this period. They represent answers to the major religious and social problems and cogent responses to the situations and incidents that he came across. Some of the hymns convey dialogues with Yogis in the Punjab and elsewhere. He denounced their methods of living and religious views. During these tours he studied other religious systems like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Islam. At the same time, he preached the doctrines of his new religion and mission at the places and centres he visited.

Since his mystic system almost completely reversed the trends, principles and practices of the then prevailing religions, he criticised and rejected virtually all the old beliefs, rituals and harmful practices existing in the country. This explains the necessity of his long and arduous tours and the variety and profusion of his hymns on all the religious, social, political and theological issues, practices and institutions of his period.

Finally, on the completion of his tours, he settled, as a peasant farmer at Kartarpur, a village in the Punjab. Bhai Gurdas, the scribe of the *Guru Granth*, was a devout and close associate of the third and the three subsequent Gurus. He was born 12 years after Guru Nanak's death and joined the Sikh mission since his very boyhood. He became the chief missionary agent of the Gurus. Because of his intimate knowledge of the Sikh society and his being a near contemporary of Guru Nanak, his writings are very authentic and reliable. He writes that at Kartarpur Guru Nanak donned the robes of a peasant and continued his ministry. In the morning, *Japji* was sung in the congregation. In the evening *Sodar* and *Arti* were recited. The Guru cultivated his lands and also continued with his mission and preachings. His followers throughout the country were known as *Nanak Panthies* or Sikhs. The places where Sikh congregations and religious gatherings of his followers were held were called *Dharamsalas*. These were also the places for feeding the poor. Eventually every Sikh home became a Dharamsala.

One thing is very evident. Guru Nanak had a distinct sense of his prophethood and that his mission was God-ordained. During his preachings, he himself announced, "O Lallo, as the words of the Lord come to me, so do I express them." Successors of Guru Nanak have also made similar statements indicating that they were the messengers of God. So often Guru Nanak refers to God as his Enlightener and Teacher. His statements clearly show his belief that God had commanded him to preach an entirely new religion, the central idea of which was the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, shorn of all ritualism and priestcraft. During a dialogue with the Yogis, he stated that his mission was to help everyone. He came to be called a Guru in his life time. In Punjabi, the word Guru means both God and an enlightener or a prophet. During his life, his disciples came to be recognised as a separate community. He was accepted as a new religious prophet. His followers adopted a separate way of greeting each other with the words *Sat Kartar* (God is True). Twenty-five years of his extensive preparatory tours and preachings across the length and breadth of the country clearly show his deep conviction that the people needed a new prophetic message which God had commended him to deliver. He chose his successor and, in his own life time, established him as the future Guru or enlightener of the new community. This step is of the greatest significance, showing Guru Nanak's determination and declaration that the mission which he had started should be continued and perpetuated. By the formal

ceremony of appointing his successor and by giving him a new name, Angad (his part or limb), he laid down the clear principle of impersonality, unity and indivisibility of Guruship. At that time he addressed Angad by saying, "Between thou and me there is now no difference." In the *Guru Granth* there is clear acceptance and proclamation of this identity of personality in the hymns of Satta and Balwand quoted earlier. This unity of spiritual personality of all the Gurus has a theological and mystic implication. It is also endorsed by the fact that each of the subsequent Gurus calls himself Nanak in his hymns. Never do they call themselves by their own names as was done by other *Bhagats* and mystics. That Guru Nanak attached the highest importance to his mission, is also evident from his selection of the successor by a system of test, and only when Guru Angad was found perfect.[2] He appointed him as his successor, who was comparatively a new comer to his fold, in preference both to his own son, Sri Chand, who also had the reputation of being a pious person, and Baba Budha, a devout Sikh of long standing, who during his own lifetime, had the distinction of ceremonially installing subsequent Gurus.

All these facts point out that Guru Nanak had a clear plan and vision that his mission was to be continued as an independent and distinct spiritual system on the lines laid by him, and that, in the context of the country, there was a clear need for the organisation of such a spiritual mission. In his own life-time, he distinctly determined its direction and laid the foundations of some of the new religious institutions. In addition, he created the basis for the extension and organisation of his message, mission and religion.

The above in brief is the story of Guru's life. We shall now note the chief features of his work, how they arose from his message and how he proceeded to develop them during his lifetime.

(1) After his enlightenment, in his first words, Guru Nanak declared the brotherhood of man. This principle formed the foundation of his new spiritual gospel. It involved a fundamental doctrinal change because moral life received the sole spiritual recognition and status. This was something entirely opposed to the religious systems in vogue, in the country, during the time of the Guru. All those systems were, by and large, other-worldly. As against it, the Guru by his new message brought God on earth. For the first time in the country, he made a declaration that God was deeply involved and interested in the affairs of man and the

world. Having taken the first step by the proclamation of his radical message, his obvious concern was to adopt further measures to implement the same.

(2) The Guru realised that in the context and climate of the country, especially because of the then existing religious systems and the prevailing prejudices, there would be resistance to his message, which, in view of his very thesis, he wanted to convey to all. He, therefore, refused to remain at Sultanpur and preach his gospel from there. Having declared the sanctity of life, his second major step was to accept the value of planning and organisation in the religious field. As such, his twenty-five years of extensive touring can be understood only as a major organisational step. These tours were not casual. They had a triple object. He wanted to acquaint himself with all the centres and organisations of the prevalent religious systems so as to assess the forces his mission had to contend with and to find out the institutions that he could use in the aid of his own system. Secondly, he wanted to convey his gospel at the very centres of the old systems and point out the futile and harmful nature of their methods and practices. It is for this purpose that he visited Hardwar, Kurukshetra, Benaras, Kanshi, Gaya, Ceylon, Baghdad, Mecca, etc. Simultaneously, he desired to organise all his followers and set up for them local centres for their gatherings and worship. The existence of some of these far-flung centres even uptil today is a testimony to his initiative in the organisational field. His hymns became the sole guide and the scripture for his flock and were sung at the *Dharamsalas*.

(3) Guru Nanak's gospel was for all men. He proclaimed their equality in all respects. In his system, the householder's life became the primary forum of religious activity. His was not a concession to the laity. In fact, the normal life became the medium of spiritual training and expression. The entire discipline and institutions of the Gurus can be appreciated only if one understands that, by the very logic of Guru Nanak's system, the householder's life became essential for the seeker. On reaching Kartarpur after his tours, the Guru sent for the members of his family and lived there with them for the remaining eighteen years of his life. For the same reason his followers all over the country were not recluses. They were ordinary men, living at their own homes and pursuing their normal vocations. The Guru's system involved morning and evening prayers. Congregational gatherings of the local followers were also held at their respective *Dharamsalas*.

(4) After he returned to Kartarpur, Guru Nanak did not rest. He straightaway took up work as a cultivator of land, wihout interrupting his discourses and morning and evening prayers. It is very significant that throughout the later eighteen years of his mission he continued to work as a peasant. It was a total involvement in the moral and productive life of the community. His life was a model for others to follow. Like him all his disciples were regular workers who had not given up their normal vocations. Even while he was performing the important duties of organising a new religion, he never shirked the full-time duties of a small cultivator. By his personal example he showed that the leading of a normal man's working life was fundamental to his spiritual system. Even a seemingly small departure from this basic tenet would have been misunderstood and misconstrued both by his own followers and others. In the Guru's system idleness became a vice and engagement in productive and constructive work a virtue. It was Guru Nanak who chastised ascetics as idlers and condemned their practice of begging for food at the doors of the householders.

(5) Another important aspect of the moral life which the Guru emphasised was the sharing of one's income. He said, "Property could be gathered only by vice." It obviously meant that while doing productive work and earning one's livelihood were moral, the amassing of wealth was evil. In this context, he introduced the new practice of sharing one's income. We have already quoted his dictum that "he knows the way who works hard and shares his earnings with others." He insisted that his disciples should share their income with others and divert it for common purposes. Every Sikh home, as enjoined by him, became a centre for helping the weak and the poor. Here too the Guru gave a personal lead. During his tours, whatever he received was given to feed the poor and finance the common kitchen. Similarly, at Kartarpur he created the institution of a free common kitchen (*Langar*) and started the practice of everyone eating at the same place.

(6) According to the Guru, moral life was the sole medium of spiritual progress. In those times, caste, religious and social distinctions, and the idea of pollution were major problems. Unfortunately, these distinctions had received religious sanction. The problem of poverty and food was another moral challenge. The institution of *Langar* had a twin purpose. As everyone sat and ate at the same place in *Pangat* and shared the same food, it cut at the root of the evil of caste, class and religious distinctions.

Besides it demolished the idea of pollution of food by the mere presence of an untouchable. Secondly, it provided food to the needy. This institution of *Langar* and *Pangat* was started by the Guru among all his followers wherever they had been organised. It became an integral part of the moral life of the Sikhs. Considering that a large number of his followers were low caste and poor members of the society, he, from the very start, made it clear that persons who wanted to maintain caste and class distinctions had no place in his system. In fact, the twin duties of sharing one's income with the poor, and doing away with social distinctions, were the two obligations which every Sikh had to discharge. On this score, he left no option to anyone, since he started his mission with Mardana, a low caste Muslim, as his lifelong companion.

(7) The Guru expressed all his teachings in Punjabi, the spoken language of Northern India. It was a clear indication of his desire not to address the elite alone but the masses as well. It is recorded that the Sikhs had no regard for Sanskrit, which was the sole scriptural language of the Hindus. Both these facts lead to important inferences. They reiterate that the Guru's message was for all men. It was not for the few who, because of their personal aptitude, should feel drawn to a life of a so-called spiritual meditation and contemplation. Nor was it an exclusive spiritual system divorced from the normal life. In addition, it stressed that the Guru's message was entirely new, and was completely embodied in his hymns. His disciples used his hymns as their sole guide for all their moral, religious and spiritual purposes. Thirdly, the disregard of the Sikhs for Sanskrit strongly suggests that not only was the Guru's message independent and self-contained, without reference and resort to the Sanskrit scriptures and literature, but also that the Guru made a deliberate attempt to cut off his disciples completely from all the traditional sources and the priestly classes. Otherwise, the old concepts, ritualistic practices, modes of worship and orthodox religions were bound to affect adversely the growth of his religion which had wholly a different basis and direction and demanded an entirely new approach.

The following hymn from Guru Nanak and the subsequent one from Sankara are a contrast in their approach to the world.

"The sun and moon, O Lord, are Thy lamps; the firmament Thy salver; the orbs of the stars the pearls encased in it.

The perfume of the sandal is Thine incense, the wind is Thy fan, all the forests are Thy flowers, O Lord of light.

What worship is this. O Thou Destroyer of birth ? Unbeaten

strains of ecstasy are the trumpets of Thy worship.

Thou has a thousand eyes and yet not one eye; Thou hast a thousand forms and yet not one form;

Thou hast a thousand stainless feet and yet not one foot; Thou hast a thousand organs of smell and yet not one organ. I am fascinated by this play of Thine.

The light which is in everything is Thine, O Lord of light.

From its brilliancy everything is brilliant;

By the Guru's teaching the light becometh manifest.

What pleaseth Thee is the real worship.

O God, my mind is fascinated with Thy lotus feet as the *bumble-bee* with the flower; night and day I thirst for them."

Give the water of Thy favour to the Sarang (bird) Nanak, so that he may dwell in Thy name."[3]

Sankara writes : "I am not a combination of the five perishable elements. I am neither body, the senses, nor what is in the body (*antar-anga:* i.e., the mind). I am not the ego-function; I am not the group of the vital breath-forces; I am not intuitive intelligence (*buddhi*). Far from wife and son am I, far from land and wealth and other notions of that kind. I am the Witness, the Eternal, the Inner Self, the Blissful One (*sivo-ham*; suggesting also, 'I am Siva')."

"Owing to ignorance of the rope, the rope appears to be a snake; owing to ignorance of the Self the transient state arises of the individualized, limited, phenomenal aspect of the Self. The rope becomes a rope when the false impression disappears because of the statement of some credible person; because of the statement of my teacher I am not an individual life-monad (*jivo-naham*), I am the Blissful One (*'sivo-ham*).

"I am not the born; how can there be either birth or death for me?

"I am not the vital air; how can there be either hunger or thirst for me?

"I am not the mind, the organ of thought and feeling; how can there be either sorrow or delusion for me?

"I am not the doer; how can there be either bondage or release for me?"

"I am neither male nor female, nor am I sexless. I am the Peaceful One, whose form is self-effulgent, powerful radiance. I am neither a child, a young man, nor an ancient; nor am I of any caste. I do not belong to one of the four life-stages. I am the Blessed-Peaceful One, who is the only Cause of the origin and dissolution of the world."[4]

While Guru Nanak is bewitched by the beauty of His creation and sees in the panorama of nature a lovely scene of the worshipful adoration of the Lord, Sankara in his hymn rejects the reality of the world and treats himself as the Sole Reality. Zimmer feels that "Such holy megalomania goes past the bounds of sense. With Sankara, the grandeur of the supreme human experience becomes intellectualised and reveals its inhuman sterility."[5]

No wonder that Guru Nanak found the traditional religions and concepts as of no use for his purpose. He calculatedly tried to wean away his people from them. For Guru Nanak, religion did not consist in a "patched coat or besmearing oneself with ashes"[6] but in treating all as equals. For him the service of man was supreme and that alone won a place in God's heart.

By this time it should be easy to discern that all the seven features of the Guru's system are integrally connected. In fact, one flows from the other and all follow from the basic tenet of his spiritual system, viz., the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. For Guru Nanak, life and human beings became the sole field of his work. Thus arose the spiritual necessity of a normal life and work and the identity of moral and spiritual functioning and growth.

Having accepted the primacy of moral life and its spiritual validity, the Guru proceeded to identify the chief moral problems of his time. These were caste and class distinctions, the institution of property and wealth, and poverty and food. Immoral institutions could be substituted and replaced only by the setting up of rival institutions. Guru Nanak believes that while it is essential to elevate man internally, it is equally necessary to uplift the fallen and the downtrodden in actual life. Because, the ultimate test of one's spiritual progress is the kind of moral life one leads in the social field. The Guru not only accepted the necessity of effecting change in the environment, but also endeavoured to build new institutions. We shall find that these seven basic principles of the spirituo-moral life enunciated by Guru Nanak, were strictly carried out by his successors. As envisaged by the first prophet, his successors further extended the structure and organised the institutions of which the foundations had been laid by Guru Nanak. Though we shall consider these points while dealing with the lives of the other nine Gurus, some of them need to be mentioned here.

The primacy of the householder's life was maintained. Everyone of the Gurus, excepting Guru Harkishan who died at an early age, was a married person who maintained a family. Guru

Nanak, when he sent Guru Angad from Kartarpur to Khadur Sahib to start his mission there, advised him to send for the members of his family and live a normal life. According to Bhalla[7] when Guru Nanak went to visit Guru Angad at Khadur Sahib, he found him living a life of quiet and meditation. Guru Nanak directed him to be active as he had to fulfil his mission and organise a community inspired by his religious principles.

Work in life, both for earning the livelihood and serving the common good, continued to be the fundamental tenet of Sikhism. There is a clear record that everyone upto the fifth Guru (and probably subsequent Gurus too) earned his livelihood by a separate vocation and contributed his surplus to the institution of *Langar*. Each Sikh was made to accept his social responsibility. So much so, that Guru Angad, and finally Guru Amar Das, clearly ordered that *Udasis*, persons living a celibate and ascetic life without any productive vocation, should remain excluded from the Sikh fold. As against it, any worker or a householder without distinction of class or caste, could become a Sikh. This indicates how these two principles were deemed fundamental to the mystic system of Guru Nanak. It was defined and laid down that in Sikhism a normal productive and moral life could alone be the basis of spiritual progress. Here, by the very rationale of the mystic path, no one who was not following a normal life, could be fruitfully included.

The organisation of moral life and institutions, of which the foundations had been laid by Guru Nanak, came to be the chief concern of the other Gurus. We refer to the socio-political martyrdoms of two of the Gurus and the organisation of the military struggle by the sixth Guru and his successors. Here it would be pertinent to mention Bhai Gurdas's narration of Guru Nanak's encounter and dialogue with the Nath Yogis who were living an ascetic life of retreat in the remote hills. They asked Guru Nanak how the world below in the plains was faring. "How could it be well", replied Guru Nanak, "When the so-called pious men had resorted to the seclusion of the hills." The Naths commented that it was incongruous and self-contradictory for Guru Nanak to be a householder and also pretend to lead a spiritual life. That, they said, was like putting acid in milk and thereby destroying its purity. The Guru replied emphatically that the Naths were ignorant of even the basic elements of spiritual life.[8] This authentic record of the dialogue reveals the then prevailing religious thought in the country. It points to the clear and deliberate break the Guru made

from the traditional systems.

While Guru Nanak was catholic in his criticism of other religions, he was unsparing where he felt it necessary to clarify an issue, or to keep his flock away from a wrong practice or prejudice. He categorically attacked all the evil institutions of his time, including oppression and barbarity in the political field, corruption among the officials and hypocrisy and greed in the priestly class. He deprecated the degrading practices of inequality in the social field. He criticised and repudiated the scriptures that sanctioned such practices. After having denounced all of them, he took tangible steps to create a society that accepted the religious responsibility of eliminating these evils from the new institutions created by him and of attacking the evil practices and institutions in the social and political fields. This was a fundamental institutional change, with the largest dimensions and implications for the future of the community and the country. The very fact that originally poorer classes were attracted to the Gurus' fold shows that they found there a society and a place where they could breathe freely and live with a sense of equality and dignity.

Dr. H.R. Gupta, the well-known historian, writes, "Nanak's religion consisted in the love of God, love of man and love of godly living. His religion was above the limits of caste, creed and country. He gave his love to all, Hindus, Muslims, Indians and foreigners alike. His religion was a people's movement based on modern conceptions of secularism and socialism, a common brotherhood of all human beings. Like Rousseau, Nanak felt 250 years earlier that it was the common people who made up the human race. They had always toiled and tussled for princes, priests and politicians. What did not concern the common people was hardly worth considering. Nanak's work to begin with assumed the form of an agrarian movement. His teachings were purely in Punjabi language mostly spoken by cultivators. They appealed to the downtrodden and the oppressed peasants and petty traders as they were ground down between the two mill stones of Government tyranny and the new Muslims' brutality. Nanak's faith was simple and sublime. It was the life lived. His religion was not a system of philosophy like Hinduism. It was a discipline, a way of life, a force, which connected one Sikh with another as well as with the Guru."[9] "In Nanak's time Indian society was based on caste and was divided into countless watertight compartments. Men were considered high and low on account of their birth and not according to their deeds. Equality of human beings was a dream. There was no spirit of

national unity except feelings of community fellowship. In Nanak's views men's love of God was the criterion to judge whether a person was good or bad, high or low. As the caste system was not based on divine love, he condemned it. Nanak aimed at creating a casteless and classless society similar to the modern type of socialist society in which all were equal and where one member did not exploit the other. Nanak insisted that every Sikh house should serve as a place of love and devotion, a true guest house (*Sach dharamshala*). Every Sikh was enjoined to welcome a traveller or a needy person and to share his meals and other comforts with him"[10] "Guru Nanak aimed at uplifting the individual as well as building a nation."[11]

Considering the religious conditions and the philosophies of the time and the social and political *milieu* in which Guru Nanak was born, the new spirituo-moral thesis he introduced and the changes he brought about in the social and spiritual field were indeed radical and revolutionary. Earlier, release from the bondage of the world was sought as the goal. The householder's life was considered as impediment and an entanglement to be avoided by seclusion, monasticism, celibacy, *Sanyas* or *Vanprastha*. In contrast, in the Guru's system the world became the arena of spiritual endeavour. A normal life and moral and righteous deeds became the fundamental means of spiritual progress, since these alone were approved by God. Man was free to choose between the good and the bad and shape his own future by choosing virtue and fighting evil. All this gave "new hope, new faith, new life and new expectations to the depressed, dejected and downcast people of Punjab."[12]

Guru Nanak's religious concepts and system were entirely opposed to those of the traditional religions in the country. His views were different even from those of the saints of the Radical Bhakti movement. From the very beginning of his mission, he started implementing his doctrines and creating institutions for their practice and development. In his time the religious energy and zeal were flowing away from the empirical world into the desert of other-worldliness, asceticism and renunciation. It was Guru Nanak's mission and achievement not only to dam that Amazon of moral and spiritual energy but also to divert it into the world so as to enrich the moral, social and political life of man. We wonder if, in the context of his times, anything could be more astounding and miraculous. The task was undertaken with a faith, confidence and determination which could only be prophetic.

It is indeed the emphatic manifestation of his spiritual system into the moral formations and institutions that created a casteless society of people who mixed freely, worked and earned righteously, contributed some of their income to the common causes and the *Langar*. It was this community, with all kinds of its shackles broken and a new freedom gained, that bound its members with a new sense of cohesion, enabling it to rise triumphant even though subjected to the severest of political and military persecutions.

The life of Guru Nanak shows that the only interpretation of his thesis and doctrines could be the one which we have accepted. He expressed his doctrines through the medium of activities. He himself laid the firm foundations of institutions and trends which flowered and fructified later on. As we do not find a trace of those ideas and institutions in the religious *milieu* of his time or the religious history of the country, the entirely original and new character of his spiritual system could have only been mystically and prophetically inspired.

Apart from the continuation, consolidation and expansion of Guru Nanak's mission, the account that follows seeks to present the major contributions made by the remaining Gurus.

NANAK II (1539-1552)

Guru Angad popularized the present form of the Gurmukhi script. It became the medium of writing the Punjabi language in which the hymns of the Gurus are expressed. This step had a far-reaching purpose and impact. First, it gave the people who spoke this language, an identity of their own, enabling them to express their thoughts directly and without any difficulty or transliteration. The measure had the effect of establishing the independence of the mission and the followers of the Guru. Secondly, it helped the community to dissociate itself from the Sanskrit religious tradition so that the growth and development of the Sikhs could take place unhampered and unprejudiced by the backlog of the earlier religious and social philosophies and practices. This measure, as shown by the subsequent growth of Sikhism, was essential in order to secure its unhindered development and progress; for it required an entirely different approach to life.

Dr. Gupta feels that this step, to a certain extent, kept the upper classes among Hindus, to which the Guru belonged, away from Sikhism, partly because they were steeped in the old religious

and Brahminical tradition, and partly because the Sanskrit tradition fed their ego by giving them a superior caste status to that of the other castes. But, the idea of equality of man was fundamental to the Sikh spiritual system. The Guru never wanted that its association with traditional religious literature should tend to water it down. The matter is extremely important from the point of view of the historical growth and study. Actually, the students of Sikh history know that over the centuries the influence of these old traditions has been significantly in evidence. It has sometimes even given a wrong twist to the new thesis and its growth. The educated persons were almost entirely drawn from the upper castes and classes. They had a vested interest, visible also in their writings, in introducing ideas and practices which helped in maintaining their privileges and prejudices of caste superiority, even though such customs were opposed to the fundamentals about the equality of man laid down by the Gurus. For example the Jats who were themselves drawn from classes, branded as low by the Brahmanical system, started exhibiting caste prejudices *vis-s-vis* the lower castes drawn from the Hindu fold.

Earlier, the Punjabi language was written in the *Landa* or *Mahajani* script. This had no vowel sounds, which had to be imagined or construed by the reader in order to decipher the writing. Therefore, there was the need of a script which could faithfully reproduce the hymns of the Gurus so that the true meaning and message of the Gurus could not be misconstrued and misinterpreted by each reader to suit his own purpose and prejudices. The devising of the Gurmukhi script was an essential step in order to maintain the purity of the doctrine and exclude all possibility of misunderstanding and misconstruction by interested persons.

The institution of *Langar* was maintained and developed. The Guru's wife personally worked in the kitchen. She also served food to the members of the community and the visitors. Her devotion to this institution finds mention in the *Guru Granth*.[13]

The Guru earned his own living by twisting coarse grass into strings used for cots. All offerings went to the common fund. This demonstrates that it is necessary and honourable to do even the meanest productive work. It also emphasises that parasitical living in not in consonance with the mystic and moral path. In line with Guru Nanak's teaching, the Guru also declared that there was no place for passive recluses in the community.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and the subsequent Gurus

selected and appointed their successors by completely satisfying themselves about their mystic fitness and capacity to discharge the responsibilities of the mission.

NANAK III (1552-74)

Guru Amar Das, though born in 1479, became the Guru in 1552 when he was in his seventies. All the same he took many significant steps. He established new centres for conveying to the people the message of Guru Nanak. Twenty-two such centres were created in different areas where persons, approved by the Guru, performed extension work. They administered both to the religious and the secular needs of the disciples; for, in the Guru's system legitimate secular needs were included in the religious needs. They collected offerings from the disciples and sent them to the Guru for the common use of the community. The Guru himself earned his living as a small tradesman.

He started the system of holding two annual gatherings of his disciples from all over the country. At his headquarters, he got constructed a *Baoli* (a small tank with a perennial source of spring water). For the Sikhs the headquarters of the Guru and this *Baoli* became a holy place of pilgrimage.

As an anti-caste and anti-pollution measure, he made it incumbent that no one, irrespective of his status or caste, could see him unless he had first partaken, along with others, of the food cooked at the common kitchen. Emperor Akbar had also to dine at the *Langar* before he met the Guru.

In his time ascetics and recluses again made an attempt to enter the Guru's flock. But the Guru issued a final injunction that no recluse or ascetic could be a Sikh. He also denounced the system of *Sati* and *Purdah* among women.

According to the Guru, the human body was the temple of God. He, therefore, laid emphasis on keeping it healthy, and sound to the end. For the same reason, he denounced the ascetic practices of torturing the body. The Guru felt that the health of the body could not be divorced from moral and spiritual well-being.

NANAK IV (1574-81)

Guru Ram Das worked as Guru for a short period. After obtaining land for the purpose, he founded the town of Amritsar which continues to be the centre of Sikhism till today. He dug a tank which became the principal place of pilgrimage. Traders and

artisans were invited to settle at the town so that its growth could be rapid. In due course it became the largest commercial centre in northern India. It was a landmark in the life of the community, because the Guru established a central place that was quite distinct from that of the Hindus and the Muslims. Since then Amritsar is for the Sikhs what Mecca is for the Muslims. All this indicates that the Guru had a distinct sense of his mission and did everything to establish it as a separate religious system and entity.

NANAK V (1581-1606)

Guru Arjan's multifarious activities, apart from making a very major contribution to the organisation of the mission, demonstrate, as laid down by Guru Nanak, that no field of life, whether secular, social or political, is excluded for the operation of a mystic. Slowly but surely the movement came out with a distinct identity of its own and with clear-cut religious and socio-political facets.

The system of voluntary offerings for the common cause and the sharing of one's earnings was made regular. Every Sikh was supposed to contribute 10% of his income to the common fund maintained by the Guru. The representatives of the Guru collected contributions from their respective areas and sent them to the common treasury.

The construction of the temple at Amritsar was started by the Guru and its foundation stone was laid by the reputed Muslim Sufi Saint, Mian Mir. He built another tank and temple at Tarn Taran. These temples had doors on all sides, indicating that these were open to all castes and communities.

The Guru had a well-organised central establishment which included the maintenance of a contingent of horses and elephants. He encouraged his followers to trade in horses from Central Asia. For his personal maintenance, the Guru also took up that trade. As such, the Sikhs became good horsemen and formed later the nucleus of military power. All these features were important developments because they were clear preparation for the military organisation that was to follow from the time of the sixth Guru. It was in the life-time of Guru Arjan that his son, Guru Hargobind, started learning how to wield the sword and going on trips for hunting.[14]

In 1598 the Guru interceded on behalf of the local peasantry with Emperor Akbar to get reduced the excessive levy of land revenue. These activities of the Guru gave him a new status. It was

at this time that the Guru came to be called by the Sikhs as *Sacha Patshah* (True Emperor). The Guru had come to guide, govern and influence the lives of the Sikhs both in the temporal and the spiritual fields. It was a significant development. The organisation of the community, according to Gupta, became a state within a state."[15]

An important step in the separate consolidation of the religion was the compilation of the *Adi Granth* as the sole and authentic scripture of the Sikhs. It has a significant feature. Besides the hymns of the five Gurus, it contains the hymns of Hindu and Muslim saints. The *Adi Granth* was formally installed at the Amritsar temple on the annual gathering of the Sikhs. From the very start it was recognized as the Sikh scripture. Emperor Akbar made an offering of 51 gold coins to the *Adi Granth*. Its installation at the only Sikh temple constructed then by the Guru and the appointment of the most venerated Sikh, Baba Buddha, as its *Granthi* (minister), show that it was meant to be the exclusive scripture of the Sikhs and the embodiment of the Gurus' system and thought. In this way conjectures about links with the other systems or scriptures were set at rest forever. This is an important step, especially when we find that in the *Guru Granth* no status or sanctity has been given to any gods, goddesses or *Avatars*.

This compilation is a landmark in the history of Sikhism. It is a clear testimony of the fact that the Gurus took this vital step to emphasise that their message and mission were new and prophetic. This fact comes out in all its glaring singularity when we see that, in the entire religious history of man, no other prophet felt it essential to authenticate his message so as to secure its purity and exclude the possibility of interpolation, confusion and misinterpretation. In fact, in most cases the utterances of the prophets were compiled by their devotees long after their ministry. This authentication of the scripture by the Guru himself once for all ensured its separate identity. In the case of other prophets, their opponents can say that the prophets themselves never meant to declare any new truths, but their overzealous followers made it into a separate system not intended by the prophets. Nothing of that kind can be asserted about the Gurus and the *Guru Granth*.

It is something very extraordinary that, in line with Guru Nanak's hymn that 'with the help of other God-conscious beings he would help everyone to be a God-centred person', the Guru included in the *Adi Granth* hymns of twenty-two Muslim and Hindu saints. It is a singular example of the Guru's sense of

personal anonymity. He truly felt that in accomplishing this task he was working only as an agent of God's mission. Otherwise also we find that contemporary saints like Mian Mir and Pir Budhan Shah, irrespective of religion and race, remained closely associated with the mission of the Gurus.

Owing to the growing religious and political influence of the Gurus, the Sikhs had got a clear consciousness of their religious and socio-political identity. Consequently, the position of the Gurus had naturally given rise to hostility, both in the religious and political quarters. Saikh Ahmad, the head of the *Naqashbandi* order at Sirhind and a leader of the revivalist movement of Islam in India, got upset at the influence of the Guru among men of both the communities. He had access to the court of Jehangir. But, probably, the chief reason that upset the Emperor was that the Guru had blessed Khusro and helped him monetarily while the latter had rebelled against Jehangir. The local administration was naturally aware of the growing socio-political strength and influence of the Guru. That this incident rankled in the mind of Emperor Jehangir, is evident from his own statement recorded in his autobiography. He wrote that he had ordered the execution by torture of Guru Arjun, unless he embraced Islam, because the Guru had raised aloft the standard of holiness and many Hindus and Muslims had foolishly become his followers.

The Guru was ordered to be executed. In addition a fine of rupees two lacs was imposed on him. Some historian say that, as a measure of clemency at the intervention of Mian Mir, this fine was imposed in lieu of the sentence of death. The Sikhs offered to pay the fine themselves but the Guru forbade them to do so. He replied to the Emperor, "Whatever money I have is for the poor, the friendless and the stranger. If thou ask for money thou mayest take what I have; but if thou ask for it by way of fine, I shall not give thee even a *Kauri* (penny)"[16]. The Guru accepted death by torture and suffered the first great martyrdom. His sacrifice further steeled the faith of the community in the mission of the Gurus. Gupta, who considers the views of all other historians as relevant material, concludes that it was principally a political execution.

A ruling administration never takes notice of a religious institution, unless it has a political complexion and potential. The Moghul emperors never bothered about any saint of the Bhakti school. The Sikh movement was growing into a clear socio-political body, fired with a religious and moral zeal. It constituted a disciplined people who were being guided and led towards their

ideals by a prophetic mystic. It was this socio-political growth which no ruler or administration could fail to take note of as a potential danger and challenge to its existence and rule. It is evident that the Sikh growth was of such dimensions that it attracted the attention of the Administration and also of the Emperor. Further, this organisation was of such size and importance that the Emperor not only took the extreme step of the execution of Guru Arjun, so as to stop altogether this unwanted growth (as recorded by the Emperor), but also found the movement and the episode as significant enough for mention in his autobiography. Jehangir was undoubtedly right that the organisation and the movement posed a political threat to the Empire. But he was mistaken in his belief that by the execution of the Guru he had nipped this growth in the bud. In this background and the context of future developments, it would surely be naive for anyone to say either that Jehangir, by this execution of Guru Arjan, converted a simple, peaceful and innocuous movement into a military organisation, or that the reaction of the sixth Guru to his father's execution was overzealous, especially when we know that by the very nature of the Gurus' thesis socio-political developments and activities were an integral part of their spiritual life. The fifth and the sixth Gurus had done nothing beyond the extension and development of the foundations laid and the organisation built by Guru Nanak.

Gupta calls Guru Arjan "an original thinker, an illustrious poet, a practical philosopher, a great organiser, an eminent statesman and the first martyr of the faith. He completely changed the external aspect of Sikhism."[17]

NANAK VI (1604-1644)

While in prison, before his execution at Lahore, Guru Arjun had sent a message to his son, Guru Hargobind, then aged only eleven, that he should henceforth maintain an army. At the very time of his installation as Guru, he insisted that he should wear two swords, one representing his spiritual leadership and the other his temporal and political leadership. Soon after it, he constructed in front of the Amritsar temple, another building called the Akal Takht (God's throne) as the seat of temporal power. This place continues to the present day as the centre of every socio-political deliberation and power of the community. There, like the two swords he wore, he raised aloft two flags, representing the two

aspects of his activities. He told his followers, "My rosary shall be my sword-belt and on my turban I shall wear the emblem of royalty."[18] The Sikhs were already engaged in the trade of horses and the Guru advised every Sikh to keep a sword and maintain a horse, wherever possible. He started recruiting a regular army. He had a personal bodyguard of 57 horsemen, and kept 700 horses, 60 gunmen and 500 infantry men. Thus a state within a state, started and developed by the earlier Gurus, was consolidated by him. When this news reached the emperor, he demanded from the Guru the fine imposed on his father. The Guru was imprisoned in the Gwalior fort along with other political prisoners of high status. Later he was released.

There is an important incident which brings out the religious policy of the Gurus. One Ram Das, a Maharashtra saint, met Guru Hargobind. He questioned him as to how he reconciled his being a successor to the spiritual seat of Guru Nanak with his living as a soldier, maintaining an army and calling himself a true Emperor. The Guru replied that Guru Nanak had given up mammon (greed for money). He had not renounced the world, and that the sword was for the double purpose of protecting the poor and destroying the tyrant.[19] These words of the Guru most clearly bring out the religious and spiritual philosophy of Sikh mysticism, its originality and its break with the past. Persons brought up in the tradition of old beliefs and ideas of dichotomy between the religious and the secular life, find it difficult to understand and grasp the significance of the Gurus' system. The problem of comprehension that confronted saint Ram Das was the same as arose with the Nath Yogis in their dialogue with Guru Nanak. It arises even now with some of our present-day academicians. But, for the Sikh mystic participation in life is spiritually essential. Consequently, the defence of moral life, reaction and responses to challenges from the environment, form an integral part of the Gurus' mystic system. The reply of Guru Hargobind is an unambiguous clarification of the system of Guru Nanak as understood by the Gurus themselves. This also explains the various empirical steps taken by the first five Gurus in order to develop their religious system and organize the Sikhs in the way they did. Saint Ram Das's meeting with the Guru had a great historical consequence, for he was so impressed by the Guru's thesis that he later trained Shivaji, the great Marhatta leader, in the same manner.[20]

Guru Hargobind sponsored the cause of the down-trodden Hindus and provided leadership to the oppressed people of

Punjab. In this struggle, he fought in the plains of the Punjab, six battles with the Moghuls. People came to him and joined his forces because they felt that no one else had the power to stand against the Emperor. In one of these battles he defeated 7,000 Moghul soldiers. Finally, he settled at Kiratpur. His reputation as a military leader spread and ambassadors of the hill Rajas waited upon him.

The organisation of the Sikhs into a separate socio-religious group with political implications had started from the time of the very first Guru. This close and integral combination of the secular and the spiritual life was a thesis which was foreign to the Indian tradition. No wonder that some of the people around the sixth Guru, including his own followers, could not understand the spiritual character of these military developments. This explains two points. First, that the transformation of the community into a spirituo-political organisation could only be gradual, because the Gurus had to carry the people with them. Unfortunately, they had all been conditioned by the old traditions. The full understanding and acceptance of the new thesis could only be slow. The Gurus, naturally, had to wait till their followers fully realized the implications of the new doctrine and owned its responsibilities. Secondly, it also confirms the view that the object was to organise a mission and a movement in the empirical world and not merely to deliver a message and embody it in a scripture or a mythical tale. The scriptural thesis had to be lived among the people and not in the seclusion of a monastery for the training of a few. The aim was to uplift everyone irrespective of caste and creed, and to convey that each one, howsoever placed, could tread the spiritual path. This choice was open to everyone and the Guru was there to organise and lead the movement. Hence the progress could only be gradual both in the education of the people and in the pace of the movement. The latter could not outstrip the former. The task was stupendous. For, it had to take place in the face of the understandable opposition of one of the greatest empires of all times.

The number and areas of sub-centres of preachings were extended. The Guru himself controlled both the religious centres and the secular centre at Amritsar. The Guru, thereby only brought out visibly and symbolically what, in view of the steps that had already been taken by the earlier Gurus, was inherent in the integrated spiritual thesis of Guru Nanak. In fact secure and clear foundations had already been laid by him. While the Gurus, and those engaged in these developments, were fully aware of their

responsibility to maintain the original spiritual purity of the religion and the entire movement, to some outsiders, including historians conditioned and committed to different doctrines and systems of religion and polity, the sixth Guru's work has seemed to show a departure from the original growth. But, a departure, as we have seen, it was not.

NANAK VII (1644-1661)

Guru Har Rai continued to maintain regular soldiers and military preparations. It was a masterly stroke of Guru Hargobind that he built a viable military organisation under the very eye of the Moghul rulers and without serious intervention by them to throttle the rising movement. Finding that the battle of succession was about to begin. Dara Shikoh met Guru Har Rai. But, later Dara was defeated by Aurangzeb and he moved towards Lahore. At Ruper Guru Har Rai met him again with his troops, but Dara was in no mood to offer resistance and renew the fight with Aurangzeb. This incident, as Khusro's incident in the case of Jehangir, was, it seems never forgotten by Aurangzeb. After ascending the throne, he called Guru Har Rai to Delhi. The Guru sent his son Ram Rai to represent him. Ram Rai, perhaps, in deference to his host, while reciting a couplet from the *Guru Granth* misquoted one word of the text. This apparent display of fear was reported by the Delhi Sikhs to the Guru. He was very unhappy about it. He not only disowned him but directed him not to appear before him at all. This event is of considerable importance. The Guru knew that he was preparing his people for a moral and military struggle with the Empire. In this battle any doubt or fear in the mind of a soldier for the cause of the mission would have been a disastrous handicap. It was fear from the minds of the people that the Gurus were trying to eradicate. They had to be taught to react boldly against every wrong or injustice, whatever be the authority which should inflict it. This new conditioning was essential for the health and strength of the community the Gurus were trying to build. The subsequent history of the struggle shows that they succeeded to a large extent. Hence the drastic action by the Guru against his own son at the latter's seeming display of fear.

NANAK VIII (1661-1664)

Guru Harkrishan as head of the faith lived only for three years. As soon as Aurangzeb found time, he sent for Guru

Harkrishan to Delhi and Raja Jai Singh was sent to escort him. But before the meeting at Delhi could take place, he fell ill and died.

NANAK IX (1664-1675)

After Guru Arjun, all the Gurus maintained regular military forces and equipment. Guru Tegh Bahadur himself had fought and distinguished himself in the battles against the Moghul forces.

Aurangzeb followed a policy of religious persecution. He imposed a tax on the Hindus and demolished and defiled their temples and religious places. Persecution was more severe in Kashmir and thousands were forcibly converted to Islam.

The Guru toured the Punjab and exhorted the people to live courageously and fearlessly. He helped them in their vocations. During this time, a deputation of Kashmiri Pandits came to the Guru and complained to him of their sad plight and the threat of their being forcibly converted to Islam. The Guru considered the matter. The crucial issue of human and religious freedom was at stake and had to be faced. The Guru finally advised them to convey to the ruler that if Guru Tegh Bahadur were converted to Islam, they would follow suit. Naturally, all this was conveyed to the Emperor. The Emperor asked the Guru to desist from political involvements and keep to religious pursuits only.[21] It is very significant to note that had the Guru's thesis and intentions admitted of this bifurcation, he would have readily obliged the Emperor. But he did not do so. Later, the Guru was arrested and taken to Delhi. Under the orders of the Emperor he was asked to embrace Islam. He naturally refused. He was put in an iron cage and asked to show a miracle. His companions were hacked to pieces or executed in his presence. The only miracle he showed was that he is said to have tied a piece of paper round his neck when he was ordered to be executed. The paper was found to contain the words that he laid his head but had not forsaken his freedom and his mission.[22] The Guru invited martyrdom to uphold the freedom of his faith and the dignity of man. This generated a wave of resentment and set the hearts of the people in the country ablaze with anger. It emboldened every honest man to be ready to face with determination the oppression that had been launched against the people. A great challenge had been posed to the religious movement started by Guru Nanak. After the martyrdom of Guru Arjun, followed the military activities of the sixth Guru. Now, the second crucial stage had been reached for

taking yet another major step. The organisation had been built and the military preparations made. A community bound in a common faith and cohesive social ideas and ideals had been formed. The people as a whole had suffered acutely under oppressive bigotry. Though helpless themselves, they were eagerly looking forward to one who should espouse their cause and relieve them of their continuing anguish and suffering. At that time, Guru Tegh Bahadur voluntarily came forward to suffer one of the greatest martyrdoms of history. He stood for man. He invited execution in order to awaken the spirit of the people and the moral and spiritual consciousness of man. So far as his own people were concerned, the leader's obvious object was, by his own example, to prepare and steel his men for the moral and grim struggle ahead, and enthuse them to make sacrifices for the cause of the faith and man. The Guru by his supreme sacrifice gave a glorious lead.

NANAK X (1675-1708)

In the life of Sikhism and the Sikh community, the period of Guru Gobind Singh is the most crucial one. Momentous decisions had to be made and steps taken concerning the Religion. In addition, the community faced serious challenges from the Empire which had become openly hostile to the Sikhs. All these problems had to be solved and measures taken to secure the progress of the mission. Because of the extreme complexity of the situation, there is, among historians ignorant of the ideology of the Gurus, a general lack of understanding of the issues involved, their implications and the solutions devised. In order to have a proper appreciation of the events and the role of the tenth Guru, it is necessary for us to have a rapid look at the system developed by the Gurus.

Guru Nanak believes that *Haumen* corrupts and destroys both the personal and the social life of man. The only remedy for it is the path of God. He envisages a two-fold moral or spiritual progress. One is the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This involves the creation of a society where all are treated alike. Second is the constitutional conversion of man into a superman. He works for the fulfilment of a free and creative society so as to eliminate aggression and encroachments on the freedom of man. In the Gurus' system, tyranny is an evil, but it is no smaller evil to suffer tyranny and not to stand up against it. This two-fold progress of man has to take place side by side, both aspects being inalienably

linked with each other. It is, in fact, a single integrated development. One could neither become God-conscious, nor be tested as such outside the main stream of life. It is the Gurus' way of living a total life. A Sikh was being moulded as a complete man. That was his training and ideal of life. His orientation was not for being a mere worshipper of the deity, nor for seeking personal salvation. His living embraced all phases of life, moral, socio-political and spiritual.

This ideal explains why Guru Nanak is so profuse in condemning evils in all aspects of life, religious, social and political. He stressed and commended the spiritual necessity of work, production and the sharing of one's earning with the needy, and, what was most important, of treating all men and women as equal in every respect. Further, he felt that the evils should not only be resisted and eliminated, but, simultaneously, the society should be so reorganised that these do not re-appear and grow again. He started the establishment of a community wedded to new spirituo-moral ideals. He himself laid the foundations of these four-fold developments and new organisations. Such institutions take time to come into shape and develop because they are contrary to the instinctive and egoistic urges of man.

Guru Nanak had laid down a mystic thesis in which moral life in the world had the highest priority. His ethical system clearly envisaged the use of force and the change of the environment in order to serve righteous causes. He organised all over the country a separate community of people. In short, he had accepted and implemented the principle of environmental, organisational and institutional changes in order to gain moral ends in all fields of life. A real sense of equality between man and man was created among his followers.

It is important to bear this context in mind. For, it enables us to understand the two pronged developments of Guru Nanak's religion. On the one hand, he created a new society with new aims and objectives. On the other hand, he tried to remove the ills of the environmental situation to the extent his new society could tackle them. The goal was the same, but the problem could be solved only by this two directional approach. Obnoxious socio-political institutions could be fought out and eliminated only by a community or society wedded to new ideals. Major environmental changes cannot be brought about by individuals alone. The organisation of a separate community was essential for the Gurus' task of reorganising the socio-political structure of the society. The

Sikhs were not a sect of any religion. They were a people with an entirely new way of life. Their social outlook and views had changed radically. The Sikh response to the military challenges from the rulers was not a temporary expedient, nor a way devised to meet any ephemeral, local or historical situation. It was a total way of life for which the Gurus had prepared them.

The Gurus continued to build and organise a classless and casteless society based on the principles laid down by Guru Nanak. The object was first to organise such a society and then to employ it for socio-political purposes. Later, along with the necessary training and orientation for moral and spiritual progress, environmental and social issues were also taken up for solution. As soon as the social base and standing of the community became consolidated, the fifth Guru began to grapple with the socio-political problems. This involved confrontation with the Empire. Since then the Gurus started military preparations for the purpose.

There were two distinct issues before Guru Gobind Singh. The foremost issue was the final organisation and consolidation of his people into a well-knit and self-governing religious community so that it could shoulder the responsibilities of the mission. The second issue related to the impending struggle against the Empire. With the vision of a prophetic mystic, the Guru assessed the situation and took steps for the solution of both the problems.

The Guru had a distinct sense of his mission. It is written,"For this purpose I came into this world; God sent me for the sake of ***Dharam*** (righteousness); wherever you are, spread ***Dharam;*** root out the oppressors and the wicked." "I have cherished you as my son, I have created you to preach righteousness; wherever you are promote righteousness; restrain the people from evil deeds." "For this purpose I was born, bear this in mind all ye saints; to propagate ***Dharam***; to protect saints, to annihilate the tyrants."[23] The Guru prayed, "O God, give me the boon that I may not deter from performing righteous deeds; nor may I fear the enemy. When I go to the field of the battle, I should have determination for victory. May your Attributes alone ever inspire me. When the end of my life draws near, may I die fighting heroically."[24]

The Guru continued the development of his religious organisation. He created, among his people, a spirit of equality, adventure, and disregard for personal possessions and accumulation of worldly goods. The following rules were prescribed for the service of food to the Sikhs and the visitors in ***Langar***.

(a) The Guru's *Langar* should be considered as belonging to God.
(b) All Sikhs and visitors should eat there.
(c) Anyone who objected to eating there for considerations of caste should be deemed a non-Sikh.
(d) A prayer to God should be offered before taking the food. Similarly, after completion of meals, prayers from the hymns in the *Adi Granth* should be recited.
(e) After eating to one's fill, no one should take any food along with him.
(f) Invitation for food from a Sikh should not be declined, nor should the guest criticise the food offered by the host.
(g) A hungry Sikh should be fed and treated respectfully.[25]

The Guru inspired the extreme devotion of his Sikhs. Writing in 1696, a historian describes the love of the Sikhs for the Guru and their faith in Guru Nanak : "They cherish such faith in the Guru as is not found in other communities. They utter his name at all times, and consider serving him as one of the most meritorious acts. If a wayfarer arrives at midnight and takes the name of Guru Nanak, he is treated as a friend and brother, no matter he may be an utter stranger or even a thief, or a robber, or an evil-doer."[26] This statement is of great significance. It was recorded when Guru Gobind Singh had already clashed with the hill princes and the Empire. And, yet, even then for the Sikhs, it was Guru Nanak, and not Guru Gobind Singh, who was deemed to be the pioneer prophet of the entire movement. It was his name that was for the Sikhs the sole point of reference and not that of any subsequent Guru.

The process of socio-spiritual development and self-identification of the Sikh society had been in progress since the time of Guru Nanak. It had been a gradual growth, the landmarks of which were distinctly discernible. Guru Nanak had started the spiritual struggle and had prepared his men for it. The subsequent Gurus had nurtured the growth of the community by the sacrifice of their lives. It was now for Guru Gobind Singh to live the final scene of this glorius drama. It was a drama in the sense that the Guru was carrying out the Will of God and not his own. But it was, at the same time, the greatest reality, for it was the final phase of the Sikh society under the Gurus. The Guru knew that his mission was to spread righteousness. He was aware of the immediate tasks he had to accomplish in the furtherance of his mission. He understood full well the might of the Empire he had to face and contend with.

It would have been entirely different, if the ideal had been mere personal salvation. But, a spiritual society, with an ideology like that of the Gurus, has to prepare itself for a perpetual was against the forces of Evil. These are always well equipped. They can be surmounted only by the blood of the martyrs and the mystics. The Guru, as the leader of the community, was ready for the extreme sacrifices he had to make. But, he had also to prepare his men whom he had to lead to victory.

For the Guru the matter of the highest priority was to prepare his people to be self reliant, self-governing and capable of leading themselves. The Sikh Gurus wanted to raise the community to the level of responsible self-direction. The Sikhs had to carry out the spiritual mission of the Gurus. They had to perform the role not only of maintaining their internal cohesion but also of reacting to the environment in the manner the community had done under the leadership of the Gurus. This was the dual role for which the Gurus had been preparing them. It is for this purpose that the tenth Guru created the institution of the Khalsa and baptised the five beloved ones as their leaders. He gave new symbols and shape to the community. The superhuman sacrifices of the Guru, unparalled in human history, and the Amrit ceremony should be deemed a part of this final stage of self-identification of the community. It was the culmination of a gradual process of development and maturity. It is clear that the primary object of the Guru in creating the institution of the Khalsa and Amrit was to put his formal seal on an integrated, responsible and independent community that the Gurus had planned to build. The Guru wanted to evolve a system for creating the leaders of the community when he left his mortal coil. It was at this time that the Guru decided to test his men who were to be the future leaders of the mission. It was not a kingship to be conferred. It was the stage set to select leaders who could make sacrifices and defy death without flinching. Let us explain how the Guru initiated the Amrit (baptism) ceremony. On the Baisakhi day in 1699, the Guru appeared with a drawn sword in the annual gathering of the Sikhs. In a resonant voice he declared that he wanted a human head for sacrifice and enquired if any Sikh could offer it. There was silence in the congregation. Then arose a Sikh announcing his readiness to sacrifice his life. The Guru took him aside in a tent. After a while, he appeared again with the same naked sword red with blood. Again he called for a second head. This time the consternation was even greater than before. The timid started slipping away. Some

thought the Guru had gone crazy. But, another brave Sikh rose and made the offer. The Guru took him to the tent. Similarly the Guru reappeared the third, the fourth and the fifth time. On each occasion he made the same demand and took the volunteer into his tent. Finally, he brought out all the five Sikhs, hale and hearty. They were robed in a new Sikh uniform. He performed the Amrit (baptism) ceremony and declared them to be the first five beloved ones (*Piaras*).

Four of these five belonged to the Sudra class and the fifth was a Khatri. As a token of their leadership and in order to set the seal on the tradition of equality, he got himself baptised at the hands of these five chosen ones. This, apart from signifying his extreme humility established them as the future leaders of the community. The Guru called this community as Khalsa, which means the purified people or God's own. At this ceremony, the Guru made a most stirring speech exhorting his men to be prepared to lay their lives for the continuous struggle in the cause of the mission. He declared that he was in the Khalsa and the Khalsa was in him.

There is a recorded incident which is relevant to the creation of the Khalsa. At the time of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Sikhs of Delhi had displayed fear and weakness. Instead of taking care of the body of the Guru, they had left the scene. Actually, it was some so-called low-caste Sikhs who boldly took charge of the head of the ninth Guru and brought it to Anandpur. It was reported to Guru Gobind Singh that apprehending trouble, the local Sikhs had slipped away and disappeared in the crowd around the place. The Guru thought over it and then observed, "I will give them such shape and form that a Sikh could be spotted and identified even from among thousands present."[27]

It is important to understand the five freedoms a person gained on receiving the Amrit. A mention of these five freedoms is being repeated even uptil today at the time of every Amrit ceremony.

(1) Freedom from all previous religions, customs and practices.
(2) Obliteration of and freedom from the effect of the past bad deeds.
(3) Freedom from the influence of the previous caste or family.
(4) Freedom from the stigma or distinction attached to a calling or a hereditary profession.
(5) Freedom from all rituals, prejudices and inhibitions.

It is significant that none of these freedoms has any reference to the impending struggle with the Empire. Each one of these freedoms has only a socio-spiritual or theological implication. The emphasis is on the identity of the religion, the independence of its character and of one's complete break with the past. The fundamental nature of these freedoms is concerned with the doctrine and the socio-religious cohesion of the community and not with any temporary or immediate objective. The creation of the Khalsa has, essentially and primarily, to be viewed as the final step in the consolidation of the Sikhs as a religious community. It was the formal founding of a new society. All traditional bonds inhibiting the progress and freedom of the individual were broken. It was a salvation from the diehard customs of the past. The individual was freed from the stigma of caste, race and profession. The shackles imposed by the old traditions, religious and social practices and prejudices were shattered. He was rescued from his past and a new freedom dawned on him.

Accordingly, we conclude that the objective of the Guru in creating the Khalsa was purely to serve the mission of Guru Nanak. Our conclusion is further supported by a very important writing of a companion of the tenth Guru. He records that by the creation of the Khalsa the tenth Guru revealed and made known what till then had been the secret goal of the Gurus and the Sikh movement. This incontrovertible contemporary evidence is a complete rebuttal of any ignorant suggestion that the Guru's step was directed by any consideration other than those of the mission itself; much less was the step a departure from the message and thesis of the earlier Gurus. There is twice an emphatic assertion in this book that this step was revelatory of the original plan of the Gurus and was the epitome of the entire movement.[28]

It was, indeed, the most momentous decision in the history of the mission. Internal and external disciplines were prescribed for the Sikhs. Basically, one had to eliminate the ego and accept the path of *Naam*. Externally one had to fulfil moral duties to the society and to the entire world. Every prayer of the Sikhs ends with the words "May God bless the whole world". The duties towards the society were, in fact, an aspect of the duties to the world. One's duties to the world one cannot perform as an individual. These can be discharged only as a community.

The Gurus not only uplifted the individual but did it through the medium of the society. Simultaneously the Khalsa, tackled the social and political problems of the time. It was only incidental that

the challenges from the political field coincided with the creation of the Khalsa. The community was meant for the purpose. It was for this role that the Gurus created and nurtured the community with their own blood.

We record the views of Dr. Gupta on the significance of the Amrit ceremony.

(1) It created an inalienable spirit of brotherhood and comradeship among his men. As soon as one joined the Khalsa all were equal. People who had lived for centuries under servility turned into doughty warriors, whose deeds of valour were sung by the whole world, even by their bitterest enemies.

(2) Each one of the Sikhs was equal in status and had the same rights and privileges. Thus 100 years before the French Revolution, principles of liberty, fraternity and equality were enunciated and became the bedrock of the Khalsa life.

(3) By his selection on merit of the five representative leaders, the Guru destroyed the theory of divine rights of kings and established the supremacy of the common man in the political field.

(4) The doctrine of collective responsibility was proclaimed. The five beloved ones—in the presence of the Holy Granth—were to be obeyed by the entire community.[29]

The second problem before Guru Gobind Singh was the confrontation with the Empire. It had reached its final phase.

For any military preparation three things are fundamentally important; the first is to create the wherewithal of organisation and equipment. But far more important are a strong sense of cohesion and loyalty among the fighting forces and a deep and abiding faith in the righteousness of the cause for which the battles are fought. For the last two items of moral equipment, Guru Nanak had laid a sound organisational basis. The succeeding Gurus developed it further. Guru Arjun took tangible steps both in the field of moral and military equipment so as to face the anticipated clash with the Imperial forces. On the organisational side, he persuaded his men to trade in horses and become good horsemen. The Guru was not unaware of what the consequences would be of his aiding and blessing Khusro, a rebel fighting against the Emperor. His greatest contribution was his confrontation with the Emperor and courting martyrdom. Nothing could be more potent to inspire the people and prepare them morally and spiritually for the mighty struggles

ahead, which were indeed the struggles of the spiritual man.

From the very beginning of his Guruship, Guru Hargobind openly started to build a military organisation. He created separate spiritual and secular centres, both headed by himself. It would be quite idle to suggest that, on the very first day of his Guruship, Guru Hargobind could take these major steps as his own innovation without instructions from his father. After making his preparations and testing the mettle of his men with the Moghul armies, he shifted the venue of his organisation to the out-of-the-way hill areas, where the mighty Moghul could not throttle the young nation in its infancy. The military preparations continued unabated even in the time of the succeeding Gurus. For obvious reasons they did not come into direct clash with the Empire; though, when the opportunity presented itself the seventh Guru did not miss it and sided with Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb's rival to the throne.

Then followed the oppressive persecutions by Aurangzeb that set a seething wave of suffering amongst the people. From the time of Guru Arjun, the Sikh Gurus had come to be the spokesmen and saviours of the poor and the oppressed. For they alone had the capacity and courage to intervene on their behalf with the rulers and stand up for all righteous causes against the might of the Moghuls. So it was quite natural for the hard-pressed Kashmiris to come to Guru Tegh Bahadur who was their only hope, especially because he was maintaining a military organisation. In view of the developing crisis and demoralization in the country, the Guru felt that the situation was ripe to offer a second martyrdom for the cause of moral and spiritual freedom and regeneration of man. It was a calculated step to invite confrontation with the Delhi Emperor.

The principles of Gurus' ethics and morality discussed earlier have essentially to be borne in mind in order fully to understand and appreciate the growth and development of the Sikh organisation and institutions. We find that whereas all the fundamental doctrines about the mystic thesis had been specified and clarified by Guru Nanak, the other Gurus worked only within the spirituo-moral limits laid by him. Seen in the light of the historical context, Guru Arjun, Guru Hargobind, Guru Tegh Bahadur and finally Guru Gobind Singh did take what seemingly were major and momentous decisions, but they were all pursued strictly within the ambit of the original thesis of Guru Nanak. The tenth Guru created the Khalsa and had direct military confrontation

with the Moghul Empire, involving the sacrifice of all his four sons and his mother. Throughout, it was, indeed, the religious plan of Guru Nanak that was being unfolded and implemented. Nay, it was the plan of God which the God-conscious men carried out.

To some people these changes may look Kaleidoscopic and appear in different colours, but it was the same light that shaped each here. Whatever be the apparent form or area of activity, but everywhere it was the barriers and the chains of man that were being broken.

Aurangzeb intensified his policies of religious persecution. It had for long been clear to the Gurus that the Moghul Empire had to be faced if the seed of moral and spiritual life had to grow. The call had been given by Guru Tegh Bahadur. In view of the impending clash with the Empire, Guru Gobind Singh speeded up his military preparations. The Guru had thought that the hill chiefs would join him in his struggle against the Empire. In the ranks of the Guru a complete sense of brotherhood prevailed. Low castes from the Hindu fold, who had swelled his organisation, got a treatment of equality. But, this did not suit the caste-ridden and feudal hill Rajputs. The spirituo-moral ideals of equality and fraternity affected their vested interests. Many of them, instead of cooperating with the Guru in the common cause of man he was espousing, became openly hostile to him. But it is of great significance that all good persons, including Muslim saints, were friendly to him. In the battle of Bhangani, Pir Buddhan Shah, a local Muslim saint, came to his aid at the head of a contingent of 700 soldiers. Two of his sons fell on the battlefield.

The defeated hill chiefs reported the growing military power of the Guru to the Muslim Rulers. Moghul expeditions sent by the local Governors under the orders of the Emperor had failed to curb him and were repulsed. The Guru fortified Anandpur Sahib. On receipt of these reports the Emperor asked his Governors to crush the Guru.

Now another stage in the history of the moral struggle had been reached. The Governors of Lahore, Sirhind and Jammu, along with the alliance of the hostile hill chiefs, failed to subdue the Guru. He knew the next stage would be a direct confrontation with the Emperor and the Imperial forces. He felt that as a leader of the mission he had to set a still more glorious example to his men and train them to rise to still greater heights of sacrifice and glory.

Ten thousand men under Painda Khan were sent to attack Anandpur. This army was defeated. Five times the hill Rajas and

the Imperial forces attacked the Guru but were repulsed with losses. Ultimately, Anandpur was besieged by the Moghul forces from Delhi, Sirhind, Lahore and Jammu. The army of the hill chiefs, joined them. On the first day the attacking army lost 900 men. The siege continued. Finally, because the supplies had completely been cut off, the Guru had to leave Anandpur. He was pursued. At Chamkaur Sahib he was again besieged. There his two sons, aged 14 and 18, voluntarily went to the field and died fighting.

Latif, the Punjab historian, writes the following story depicting the spirit of the Guru's son even on the last day of the siege. A person from the besieging commander brought a message that as the Guru had practically no army and was pitted against the mighty Imperial forces, he should surrender and seek conversion. At this the Guru's son spoke, "Utter another word and I will smite your head from your body and cut you to pieces, for daring to so address our chief."[30] Even at this time of peril, the Guru was not inclined to leave the place but the leaders of the community asked him to move out of the fort so as to reorganise his men. In the darkness of night the Guru left almost alone.

All his men left behind lost their lives. The party in which the mother and the two younger sons of the Guru had left from Anandpur was betrayed. His sons aged 8 and 10 were executed at Sirhind. Within a span of a week the Guru lost his mother, all the four sons and everything. But the Guru was not dismayed. The letters he wrote to Aurangzeb, called the Epistles of Victory, are a testimony to the loftiness of his spirit. He continued the struggle. He died in 1708 as the result of treacherous stabbing by an agent of the Nawab of Sirhind. Within one and a half years of his death the Moghul forces were humbled. The Sikhs became supreme in all the areas.

That was the miracle the Guru had wrought. Dr. Gupta writes : "There are in this world men who are endowed by nature with infinite capacity for attaining perfection. In the days of peace they work for the solace of mankind, and strive to smooth the way for the chariot of progress. In times of calamity they suddenly rise up to guide the people, and give them an ideal, great and glorious. While putting that ideal into execution, they remain stoic to the shocks of adverse fortune. They endure untold mortifications and sufferings, but stick fast to their ideal, and cheerfully make supreme sacrifices. The grateful world would point to Guru Gobind Singh as one of such men.

"His dream and deeds wrought a wonderful change in his

own generation in the religious, military and political life of the people. His personality was so fascinating, so bewitching, so dynamic, so momentous and so unforgettable that we are seized with wonder at the changes which took place in Punjab within one year and half of his death. He was the greatest genius of his age. Whenever we touch that short life, as he died at the age of forty-two, we are at once brought into contact with a live wire. He was a meteor that consumed itself to light the world. He was luminous like the sun, and had conquered death.

"He possessed a rare combination of so many excellences, supreme self-denial, marvellous intellect, super-human will-power, great heart and limitless energy. He examined life and sought its real meaning and true goal. He came to grips with this fundamental question. He realized his deep bond to humanity. He was moved by the sufferings he saw around him. He decided to help men find freedom.

"Guru Gobind Singh was not destined to have peace in his lifetime. He was born in conflict. He was brought up in conflict. He lived in conflict, and he died in conflict. This conflict was not of his own making. It was an age of conflict. Conflict was thrust upon him by the force of circumstances, and he had a full measure of it. It was a holy conflict. It aimed at regenerating a decaying people. It endeavoured to create a new nation. It planned to lay the foundation of a new society based upon justice and freedom of conscience. It sought to promulgate the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.

"At the age of nine Gobind Singh had his father sacrificed in the cause of religious freedom. Between the age of nine and thirty-nine, in thirty years he had to fight as many as twenty battles, nine before the creation of the Khalsa and eleven afterwards. He had enemies all around. He had little resources in men, money and material. Within a week, in December 1704, he laid at the altar his mother and all the four of his sons. Besides, thousands of his devoted followers were launched into eternity. Eventually at the young age of forty-two, he shuffled off this mortal coil in the cause of freedom and in the service of humanity. Can there be a greater and nobler sacrifice than this ? The legacy left behind by him was that of sacrifice, service, self-support and self-respect."

Bulleh Shah, a celebrated Sufi Muslim saint of Punjab, was a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh. He pays a tribute to the Guru thus :

"I neither say of the past; nor do I speak of the future; but

I talk of the time of Guru Gobind Singh and declare openly :

That but for him all the Hindus would have been converted to a foreign culture and religion."[31]

"Victory deserves the applause of the people; but a heroic defeat deserves their compassion. One is magnificent, the other is sublime. Martyrdom is more glorious than success. The martyrs struggle for the great work with the inflexible logic of the ideal. They give their life, a pure gift, for progress. They accomplish the will of providence. They perform a religious act. At the appointed hour, obedient to the divine will, they enter into the tomb. In this stoical disappearance they leave behind a landmark on the path of progress."[32] "As a brave soldier and leader, Gobind Singh is undoubtedly amongst the greatest saviours of mankind."[33]

Dr Gupta concludes that the creation of the Khalsa and the bestowal of political sovereignty on the Khalsa are two of the Guru's acts of crowning glory.

26

A Sikh Mystic

Our views about Sikh mysticism are based on the *Guru Granth* and the Gurus' lives which are the true mirror reflecting their system. Dissenters may still claim that we have expressed only an interpretation which cannot be taken to be axiomatic. In order to dispel the possibility of any doubt, we have already given authoritative interpretation of Guru Hargobind himself, which he expressed in his dialogue with saint Ram Das. We now propose presenting a brief sketch of the life of a recent Sikh mystic, Baba Wasakha Singh. His views will show how he understands the gospel of the Gurus and the path laid by them.

According to the unanimous opinion of his knowledgeable contemporaries. Baba Wasakha Singh was a mystic of eminence.[1] He was held in the highest esteem by the Sikhs and other communities in the Punjab. He was born in 1877 at Dader in the district of Amritsar. His uncle Baba Khushal Singh was also a well-known mystic. According to Babaji, as he was affectionately called, he attained, by the Grace of God, the mystic union at an early age. After his marriage and some years of service in the country, he went to America as a Punjabi emigrant to that land. There also he earned the respect of all those who came in touch with him. He was looked upon by them as a person of religious eminence. He gave his entire bank balance as a contribution for raising the first Sikh Gurdwara (shrine) in Stockton. He was a guide and helper to all the needy persons. The First World War broke out in 1914. India was then under the British yoke. Indians in the States planned to raise a revolt against the British. A revolutionary organisation, called the Ghadr Party was started. Babaji became one of its principal members. In 1914 most of these revolutionaries came to India. They made contacts in the Indian army and among the people so as to organise the rebellion. But the revolt could not be a success because the plans leaked out. Babaji was arrested, tried for treason and transported to Andamans as a life convict.

Scores of people were sent to the gallows. His property in India was confiscated. As regards his property in the USA, it had already been donated for the public cause.

It is, however, pertinent to state that it was a time when Gandhi and Tilak were cooperating with the British in their war effort. All we wish to indicate is that it was the mystic intuition of Babaji that urged him to join the revolutionary party and raise the revolt. Another Sikh mystic, Sant Randhir Singh, who had also joined the Ghadr movement, was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment. Babaji's health broke down because of the unhealthy climate and the tortures he was subjected to in the Andaman Jail. Following a government order of general amnesty on winning the First World War, he was released after serving a sentence of 4 or 5 years in the jail there.

On arrival in India the first step he took was to organise a committee in order to raise funds for aid and stipendiary assistance to political sufferers and their dependents. As the head of this Committee, he became, both for the surface and the underground revolutionaries, the cheif contact man in the political organisation. Consequently he continued to be an obvious suspect in the eyes of the Government. The police always kept him and his activities under strict surveillance.

Following the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the Akali agitation for the management of Sikh shrines, Punjab was in political ferment. Babaji joined these struggles. As a Sikh mystic he was deeply respected in the community. He was appointed the cheif *(Jathedar)* of the Akal Takhat—the highest religio-political seat of the Sikhs. Again, when the desilting operations were undertaken by the Sikhs at the Tarn Taran shrine, he was chosen by the Sikh community as the leader *(Jathedar)* among the five *Piaras* (Beloved ones). During that period, there arose a conflict among the members of the top religious organisation of the Sikhs. By common consent he was appointed the arbitrator to settle the differences.

But, all the same, his other political activities continued unabated. Frequently, and for years he was jailed or interned. Most of Babaji's associates were members of the Communist or the Socialist parties, all fighting for socio-political causes and freedom of the country. Here is one of the appeals he issued to his countrymen: "Each one of you should help and join the freedom fighters in their war for independence. Slavery is a great curse. If you cannot help the struggle for freedom, at least desist from

obstructing and opposing the efforts of the patriots. You have been praying for the victory of the British so as to save them from defeat at the hands of Germans. Can you not at least pray for those engaged in the fight for freedom of your own country ? Is not death better than the present slavery ?"[2] A few more words about his political views. He said that it was the Will of God that all men should live as equals and disparity among them should go. All forces, even the biggest Empires and Powers, if they came in the way of this progressive movement initiated by God, would be crushed. He used to observe jokingly, "Sikhs feel I am not a good Sikh because most of my associates and co-workers are communists who have no faith in God. On the other hand, communists say that I can never be a good communist because my first loyalty is to God."

Hans Sarvar gives an account of the lives and views of a noted chain of Sikh mystics who lived between 1830 and 1950. In that book Babaji finds a prominent mention as one of the great personalities. The editor, himself a mystic, describes him as an outstanding living mystic. Most of his early morning was spent in his devotional remembrance of God and in meditation. Those in trouble made all kinds of requests to him for alleviating their sufferings. Invariably he prayed for them. Many cases have been verified in which he had done the healing. He never tried to take credit for the healing that took place. When anyone made a request, he would say, "Let us pray together to God to help us." And he would pray to God thereafter.

True, Babaji's views about mysticism were deeply dyed by the *Guru Granth* and the lives of the Sikh Gurus. All the same, his statements about mysticism are very clear on the issues we have discussed earlier. We record the translation of extracts from a poem written by Babaji while he was in the Andaman jail.

"Some persons say that there is no God. They proclaim and spread this falsehood. I hereby state the truth, true God has shown His presence to the *Bhagats* (mystics)." "Many Mahatmas have stressed that one should give up the house-holder's life and have resort to the seclusion of the forest. There, they suggest, one should take to ascetic practices, give up food and clothing, and starve the beautiful human body to a skeleton. For the purpose, they recommend all kinds of self-inflicted tortures, including hanging oneself upside down, standing erect all the time and smearing the head and the body with ashes. Some get themselves beheaded at Kashi, others have their limbs mutilated. Do not imagine that it is

easy to have one's head removed in the name of God. But, hail, Guru Nanak and the ten Gurus, who have shown a lovely, glorious and straight path, without fruitless self-tormenting of the body. No practice of self-mortification can destroy the snake of egoism (*Haumen*). Live as a householder in the world, and follow the advice of the Gurus for earning your living by honest means and for sharing your income with others. Live well and keep your body, house and clothes neat and clean, remembering God all the time. Give good education both to your boys and girls. Be on your guard against the wiles of the egoself and follow the way of *Naam*. The ego misleads you. Beware of it and keep yourself on to the path of God, always remembering Him. Control your ego, otherwise it is likely to lead you into difficulties and land you in deep waters. Be strong and bold enough to keep it under check, because few can escape its machinations. Practice your meditation and concentration in order to keep the mind in tune with the Word of God, thereby hearing the unstruck music. If you keep your mind attuned to God (*Waheguru*), you will remain tranquil and in peace, and have no pain and suffering. Always raise your voice against those who are tyrannical to man. Bring those who shun the poor and the weak on to the right path. There is but one God and we are all his children. Let us love one and all. Fill your heart with the love of God, second serve your country and, third, use your earnings for the service of man. Practice these three virtues and educate your children to do the same. God approves and acclaims those who imbibe these values."[3]

The editor of Hans Servar, while recording the above poem, writes that Babaji's views are well known, namely, that howsoever religious devotion and meditations (*Bhakti*) one may practise and, whatever might be one's conduct and merits, if one has not at heart the love of man or compassion for him, one is hardly a worthwhile Sikh (mystic). Further, that if anyone is unjust or oppressive, all his meditations or *Samadhis* and *Bhajan* are of no avail. He writes that Babaji's whole life had been spent in fighting those who were tyrannical and unjust to man.[4]

Having given the background, let us now record his views on mysticism. He observed, "It is a great achievement to have the mystic experience of God. I cannot describe the depth of bliss one finds in that state. But the Gurus' mysticism goes ahead and higher than that. While being in tune with God, one has to do good in the world and undertake the service of man. It is a higher stage than the one of mystic bliss. This is the stage of Gurus' Sikhism.

You know how difficult it is for an ordinary person to give up the worldly pleasures and possessions, instead of following the path of God. It is even more difficult for the mystic to come out of the state of his intense and tranquil bliss in order to serve man. But, that is the Will of God. It is the highest mystic stage to serve the poor and the downtrodden and yet remain in union with Him." At another time he said, "The mystic bliss is so intense that a moment's disconnection with it would be like death to me, but the higher stage than that is not to remain enthralled in it, but, side by side, to work consistently for the well-being of suffering humanity." This statement solves another point of Sikh mysticism, viz., that even during his life the mystic never loses touch with God and the mystic union is never interrupted. Some mystic disciples of Babaji were anxious that he should devote himself primarily to missionary work concerning Sikhism rather than spend his time in socio-political activities which were a great strain on his feeble health, especially during his old age. He replied, "You know what is the Will (*Raza*) of God for me; you also know that in doing political work I am only carrying out His Will and not my own will. In wanting me to remain engrossed in mystic bliss and in doing missionary work (*Dharam-parchar*) do you want that in God's Court I should be counted among those who avoided to carry out His Will (*Raza*)." This reply settled the issue. In the same context, he spoke on another occasion, "Some persons want me to do missionary work regarding the mystic way to God. Such work would be a life of peace and ease for me. People would come, bow themselves before me, touch my feet and listen to my lectures. Do you think a life of such comfort is difficult for me? But, brothers, this is not the way the Sikh Gurus taught us. A Sikh's first duty is to work for the welfare of man and react to injustice and wrong wherever it is and whatever be the cost." At another time he said, "What kind of devotion (*Bhakti*) is that in which one remains engrossed in one's meditations and the poor suffer all around us. This is not mysticism. A Guru's Sikh must work and serve the poor."

Babaji's observation about the Will of God shows, as also stated in the *Japji*, that a mystic becomes aware of the right role he is called upon to play and that he must carry out His Will in the world. On another occasion, a devout Sikh addressed him, "Babaji, I feel I should go to Russia, the land of disbelief in God, and convey and preach there the lofty message of the Sikh Gurus." For sometime Babaji listened to this and then said, "What would

you teach to the Russians that they should also become political slaves like us ?" By this one sentence he not only punctured the bubble of a misconception about religion, but also enunciated clearly what were the right priorities for a mystic or a devout Sikh.

We have given a brief description of Baba Wasakha Singh's ideas about the duties and role of a Sikh mystic and of anyone trying to tread the path of God. Like the Sikh Gurus, he justified the use of force for a righteous cause.

If one were to trace merely his political activities during the struggle for freedom and righteousness, without taking into account his mystic achievements, one would get an entirely wrong impression about his religious or mystic personality. Once a lawyer, who was aware only of Babaji's socio-political activities, observed, "They say Babaji is a great mystic, but from my acquaintance with him, all I can say is that he is an honest, good and devoted political fighter without any personal ambitions." All this, in a way, explains how persons ignorant of true mysticism, or with narrow religious ideas, grossly misunderstand and misinterpret the role of Guru Gobind Singh as a true religious leader merely because of his militant activities and the creation of the Khalsa.

The life of Baba Wasakha Singh shows that in Sikh mysticism there is no divorce between God's life and the moral life, and between the life of a mystic and the life of one who reacts against all kinds of economic, social and political injustice and oppression. In fact, both activities are inter-linked and the one leads to the other.

The above statements about the life and views of a recent Sikh mystic show how identical are his views with those we have expressed regarding Sikh mysticism. In the spiritual life, love of God and man is of primary importance. From this follows the greatest relevance of socio-political work in order to achieve the equality of man. One has to be on guard against the pitfalls of ego-centrism which lead to human sufferings. In the same way, the mystic has to avoid being satisfied with the joys of union with God, He should not fail to carry out His Will in the socio-political field.

We find that the views of Baba Wasakha Singh are in tune with those of the Gurus. Few would suggest seriously that his mystic experience and ideas are not typical, but are just personal to him. Separately, we have given the views of some recent Hindu mystics. Their ideas are quite the same as those expressed by the mystics of Upanisadic period. Both Baba Wasakha Singh and most of the recent Hindu mystics have lived in an identical cultural

background and practically in the same period of time. And, yet, while there is a striking similarity between the ideas and ideals of the Sikh Gurus and those of Babaji, there is a complete contrast between the experiences of the latter and those of the modern Hindu mystics. Similarly, the experience of the modern Hindu mystics are entirely congruous with those of the Upanisadic sages expressed over 2500 years earlier. All this leads to the evident conclusion that it is the character of the mystic experience itself that governs the conduct and the views of the mystic and not the cultural background in which he is brought up and lives. For, we have also seen that 'Christian mystics, with a common cultural background, have expressed very variant views. Unless one doubts the very validity of all mystic experience, it is not possible to explain, on any other ground, the similarities and contrasts pointed out above. The views of Baba Wasakha Singh give an authentic interpretation of Sikh mysticism. They also clarify the contrast between Prophetic mysticism and Quietist or Merger mysticism.

27

Conclusion

We have briefly surveyed the major religious systems of the world. The salient aspects of Sikhism have also been described. From the comparative context available to us, it should now be possible to draw some general conclusions about mysticism and Sikhism. We shall also attempt to identify the chief visible trends and the inter-relations, if any, among the broad aspects and assumptions of the various systems. Religion and mysticism, as seen by us, are virtually synonymous. Religion, when it gains the highest consciousness, is mysticism. This proposition, as understood by the outsiders, and as viewed by the mystics themselves, would be stated. We shall confine our conclusions to only seven issues : (i) what is religion, (ii) kinds of religion, (iii) religion and psychology, (iv) religion and philosophy, (v) religion and ethics, (vi) the Indian religious tradition, and (vii) Sikhism, its characteristics, classification and comparison.

What is Religion

Religion today is no longer confined to the old and the esoteric, a preserve of the priest, the recluse and the ascetic. Nor does religion share its domain with any branch of knowledge. It deals with the totality of life and the whole of man. Philosophy, science, theology and all branches of rational knowledge only assist religion. They do not compete with it. Nor are they divorced from it, in so far as nothing is divorced from life. Religion is the *elan* of life. It is its vitality. Religion governs both the so-called spiritual and the secular. It gives life a sense of discrimination and direction. For this very reason and mysticism are not separate nor two. They are, in a way, identical. In fact, mysticism is the epitome of religion. The attainment of the mystic consciousness is the goal of religion. This consciousness is the light that guides man.

A confirmed rationalist and sceptic like Bertrand Russell concedes : "The greatest men, who have been philosophers, have

felt the need both of science and of mysticism." The combination of the mystic and the scientist forms "the highest eminence" that "it is possible to achieve in the world of thought". "This emotion (mystic sense) is the inspirer of whatever is best in man."[1] Stace goes a step further. He feels that if mysticism were discouraged or exterminated from life, if that should at all be possible, "an immense and indeed a disastrous disservice would be done to mankind." He believes, "finally, *it is possible that the direction of* human evolution in future million of years, if human race survives, will be towards the spread of mystical experience to most men and not merely its possession by a few rare individuals as now. It is possible, in short, that the superman of the future is to be the mystic man."[2] This is the view of two rationalists.

Let us consider the views of another thinker who is neither a rationalist nor a mystic. He appears to suggest the mystic way by taking the rationalist route. He treads the rationalist path and feels dismayed. Schweitzer in his book 'Civilisation and Ethics' surveys the entire field of Greek and Western thought and philosophies and comes to a dismal conclusion. He finds no trace of the ethical in the working of the world or any sound basis for the ethics in the world of thought. Neither world-and-life-affirmation nor ethics can be founded on what our knowledge of the world can tell us about the world. In the world we can discover nothing of any purposive evolution in which our activities can acquire a meaning. Nor is the ethical to be discovered in any form in the world-process. The only advance in knowledge that we can make is to describe more and more minutely the phenomena which make up the world and their implications. To understand the meaning of the whole and that is what a world-view demands is for us an impossibility." "I believe I am the first among Western thinkers who has ventured to recognize the crushing result of knowledge." "Every world-view which fails to start from resignation in regard to knowledge is artificial and a mere fabrication, for it rests on an inadmissible interpretation of the world." "The rational thought of today, therefore, does not pursue the phantom of getting to know the world. It leaves knowledge of the world on one side as something for us unattainable, and tries to arrive at clear ideas about the will-to-live which is within us." "What is decisive for our life-view is not our knowledge of the world but the certainty of the volition which is given in our will-to-live. The eternal spirit meets us in nature as a mysterious creative power. In our will-to-live we experience it within us as volition which is

both world-and-life-affirming and ethical." "World-and-life-affirmation are non-rational. They are not justified by any corresponding knowledge of the nature of the world." "If rational thought thinks itself out to a conclusion, it arrives at something non-rational, which, nevertheless, is a necessity of thought." "Rational thinking, which is free from assumption, ends therefore in mysticism." "We must all venture once more to be 'thinkers' so as to reach mysticism, which is the only direct and the only profound world-view." "We must all, through thought, become religious."[3]

Schweitzer finds that the rationalist road comes to a dead end. Reason, we feel, is by itself a disappointing blind alley. We can find neither meaning nor direction in the course of the chaotic universe. The inevitable rational inference is that it is racing towards a dismal death. As against it, the only existential truth we are aware of is that life wants to live. This is a certainty we experience both inside us and outside in life. This truth which we experience, is opposed to all rationalistic inferences. Thought has simply failed to back and support rationally what we feel, intuitively, as the very basic character of our being. This inability of human reason to resolve the dichotomy between thought and the will-to-live, has been the fundamental problem of life and the cause of human insecurity and suffering. All search of the abstract thought has not taught us how to live profoundly. The knowledge of the 'essence' of things does not help us in the art of living or our existence. Our knowledge of 'truth' never tells how to live truly. The greatest achievement of reason is to expose its own bankruptcy.

Religion deals with the will-to-live. It shows the way to true living. It breaks the alienation between 'essence' and 'existence'. Abstract thought creates that alienation. The basic problem is not to know but how to live. Religion tends to solve this problem. We can have a glimpse of 'truth' only by trying to live truly. It can never happen the other way round. Religion is the art of true living. It leads us on to the road of real existence where there is harmony between Reality and us.

In all the religious systems we have considered, the goal of life is the development of the religious or mystic consciousness. That is the state towards which all human endeavour is directed. The ideal person is the superman, the *Jivanmukta* or the mystic. His state has been described variously. It has a number of uncommon features. The mystic believes he has reached the

summit of human progress and feels no deficiencies. He is tranquil, calm and confident. The mystic gains a proverbial certitude. We are aware that our normal consciousness works within a scope of error, review and revision of our assessments and reactions. We are always wavering and all our conclusions are tentative because our knowledge is only opinions. By its very nature it has no certainty nor finality. But, no faith is more impregnable and its certitude more unshakeable than that of the mystic. We have known of a leftist, Koestler, becoming a mystic, but never has a mystic changed his faith in human history. Hence the maxim : once a mystic always a mystic. He is in a state of joy and bliss which does not wane or wear off with time. 'It is an inspiration and an intoxication which', according to Guru Nanak, 'is permanent'.[4] The mystics are the pace-setters in ethics and morality. They set the standard. They are its custodians. Reason can never give an ethical world-view. Seen rationally, all values and ethics are a sheer prejudice, symptoms of the soft mind. Plato, while trying to create the ideal state only landed himself into the slave market. He had to flee from there when rescued by the help of admiring friends. A pacifist Russell suggested that in order to avoid the appalling disaster of a Russian victory, threat of force or, if necessary, actual use of force should be made against the USSR, so as to impose on it the rule of a democratic world Government. He further recommended that for the purpose force should be employed against Russia before it developed a big stock pile of atom bombs and became a threat to the West.[5] But, with mystics it is different. They are willing to pay the highest cost for their convictions. Death has no dread for them. Even rationally it is difficult to dismiss such persons as suicidal psychopaths. For, it is a Christ, a Mohammad, a Guru Tegh Bahadur, a Guru Gobind Singh, who bring home to us the reality and validity of ethics and moral life. The laws of love and ethics can be derived and accepted as a matter of faith only from the lives of prophetic mystics. As it is, the stark logic of human history depicts us only to be a race of struggling beings in which every other person is a potential adversary with his eyes set on grabbing all the products of the world. Otherwise, how can we explain that modern Russia and China, both avowed protagonists and defenders of the rights of the poorest proletariats of the world, have been each other's bitterest enemies. In their report, *The Limits to Growth*, for the Club of Rome, the authors have brought out a computerised and cool analysis, estimate and projection of the resources of the world and their anticipated consumption in the

decades to come. They opine that at the rate at which the resources of the earth are being utilised and depleted, man cannot for long escape the catastrophe towards which he has been heading since the last century. One of their major proposals in order to avoid the impending calamity is to curb our egocentrism. "Short of world effort, today's already explosive gaps and inequalities will continue to grow larger. The outcome can only be disaster, whether due to the selfishness of individual countries that continue to act purely in their own interest, or to a power struggle between the developing and developed nations. The world system is simply not ample enough nor generous enough to accommodate much longer such egocentric and conflictive behaviour by its inhabitants."[6] This signal about the gloomy fate of man and this prescription against egoistic living is not by any morbid missionary or a paranoiac priest to extol the redemptive role of Christ. The authors of the warning are hardheaded scientists and statisticians dealing impersonally with a mass of date of exponential growth of various kinds.

Since the time of the Buddha, the same warning has been given to man by persons whom we know as mystics. They have been the guiding stars and leaders of men in the field of values and morality. Religion, as we understand from the great prophetic mystics, is the organising consciousness for the perfection of life. It does not concern a segment or section of it. It governs and directs the totality of life towards an ideal of hope, freedom and creative living. This is the role of religion or mysticism.

Kinds of religion

On this issue there are two broad views. First, that all religions and mysticisms are basically of the same kind. This is generally the view of outsiders and most of the students of mysticism. Stace divides mysticism into two classes, the Introvertive mysticism and the Extrovertive one. The Extrovertive one is what we call Nature mysticism. Actually, it is the Introvertive on with which we have been mainly concerned. Stace feels that whereas all Introvertive mysticism is of one and the same kind, differences in the metaphysical views of the mystics are due to the variant cultural backgrounds in which the mystics have appeared. To Zaehner, such a view appears superficial. He writes, "This thesis is commonly supported by 'indifferentists', those generous but loose-minded persons who would have us believe that all religions are equally true and that proselytism of any sort is therefore wrong, and that the Spirit of God manifests itself in different guises throughout the

length and breadth of this wide world, adapting itself to the different conditions of men and exhibiting the One Truth here in Jesus Christ, there in a Krishna or in the Buddha, or again in Lao Tzu or Mohammad. This view may be dictated by greatness of heart; it has, however, all too frequently been associated with a distaste for constructive thought exhibiting itself in theology, and for dogmatism of any kind, and it has so often sprung from an intellectual laziness which would content itself with comfortable half-truths rather than come to grips with the hard facts which so persistently and unkindly break into the fine-spun web of good intentions. It is only when the facts have been grasped and the differences analysed that there can be any hope of discerning a divine purpose behind the always antagonistic and sometimes warring creeds. The function of the student of comparative religion must be to analyse the facts and point out the differences."[7]

Purely on the basis of the statements of the mystics themselves, we are inclined to agree with Zaehner. Our survey has revealed that prophetic mystics are a class apart. Broadly speaking there are two clear and well-demarcated streams of mysticism or religion. The differences are not so much in the metaphysical position as in the entire way of life and ethics or in their world-view. The matter of real significance is the mystic's approach towards life and how the same affects and directs it. Ultimately, it is life that has to be the test of everything. We have no other standard by which to measure anything. Mysticism is not a magic show. It is directly relevant to life. It pertains to the highest consciousness. Man too is a unit of consciousness. Mystic consciousness cannot be unrelated to the world. Hence the approach of the mystic to life and the world is fundamental in order to understand, assess and classify the character of mysticism or a religion.

Seen in this context, we can clearly discover two mystic systems, each moving and facing in exactly the opposite direction For the first group, life as such is not of primary importance. It is an illusion, a suffering, an evil, an entanglement, a bondage or fetters. Even if life is supposed to be real, it cannot be the field of spiritual endeavour. For, all activity is either binding or relates only to the transformation of matter from the meshes of which the spiritual element has to be rescued. A natural corollary of this approach is resort to renunciation, asceticism, penances, monasticism, tortuous yogic or other meditations, celibacy, general other-worldliness and dissociation from life. Obviously, for this group,

socio-political life and ethics cease to be of primary significance both for the spiritual seeker and the mystic. Whatever be the metaphysical view evolved in order to explain the concerned mystical system, the approach and attitude to life mentioned above are fully sanctioned by it. If dualism is asserted, the object is to isolate the spiritual element from its involvement with matter. If monism is accepted, worldly activity becomes a mere appearance and not of any practical value. In systems that contribute to the somewhat Platonic view, man is just a transformation of the original 'idea' in God. Reversion to Him and withdrawal from the world are the mystic goal. Pantheistic systems too maintain a similar approach. In them moral responsibility ceases to have any meaning. The goal of life remains merger in God or *Nirvana*. Even if the system uses theistic colours and terminology, the life-view remains the same. In reference to such Indian systems as Jainism, Yoga, Sankhya, Buddhism and Vendanta, Zimmer writes, "This is the basic Indian concept of the way—a fundamentally static view of the 'march to enlightenment' (*bodhikarya*). In the Yoga-sutras, the goal is represented as the attainment of "isolation-integration" (*Kaivalya*), in the Sankhya as the achievement of 'discriminating insight' (*Viveka*), in Vedanta as the realisation of the 'Transcendental Self' (*atman-Brahman*), and in Buddhism as 'Enlightenment' (*Bodhi*), but in essence these goals are one."[8] In short, all these mystic systems are what Schweitzer calls life-negating, being opposed to the ethical world-view of life-affirmation. To this group belong, practically all the Indian mystic systems, Sufism and a majority of the Christian mystics.

Next is the group of theistic mystics like Christ, Mohammad and the Sikh Gurus. Their attitude towards the world is positively life-affirming and ethical. The world is a meaningful creation of God. It is not only a reality but it is the sole field of spiritual and moral functioning for man. The goal of human life is to develop a religious or mystic consciousness in order to be the creative instrument of God and His Will. Here the stream of mystic life flows in an entirely different direction. God created the world for a 'serious purpose'. God is creative Love for all men. It is in our expression of love for man and life that we partake of the life of God and become the instrument of His Will. Life is not a bondage but it is a beautiful creation of God. It is an opportunity for man to shed his egoistic consciousness and instead to develop the mystic consciousness. It is the highest consciousness of man, meant to organize life according to the laws of God and His Love. The

goal of life is neither return to Him, nor a life of isolation or merger, but an active and creative life. It is clearly an ethical ideal of life-and-world-affirmation. Like the *Bodhisattva*, the mystic does not turn his back to life. The mystic never feels that he is God, nor that he is His equal. His relation with God is forever that of the creature and Creator, of the devoted instrument of the Graceful God. The prophetic mystics are usually theistic.

It would, indeed, be highly incongruous and inaccurate to call both kinds of these mysticisms or religions as belonging to one and the same class. Sophistry apart, in practice there is hardly anything that is common in ideals, methods and approach between these two groups of mysticism or religion.

Purely from the ethical and moral angle there are three groups of mysticism. Nature of Extrovert mysticism is amoral and indifferent to the demands of ethics. For the second group of mystics, the world-renouncers, moral life has no final validity. Either good activities have to be shed along with the bad ones, or like the rafter those have to be dropped when one reaches the other shore and achieves the mystic height. In the third category, it is entirely different. Both for the seeker and the mystic, moral life has a priority and precedence. For them awakened love is the essence of the mystical experience. It flows for the service of man. Love is the fountain of all virtues. It is the only human activity through which we feel and realise our nearness to man and God. For the purpose of this chapter we shall call the mystics of this group as Activists and all mystics of the second group as Quietists.

From the views of Bergson, Hocking, Zaehner and Abdul Qaddus it would appear that the mystic paths of the Quietist and the Activist are partly common. But, they believe that the prophetic mystic goes further on that path. He is not content with the union alone, but, carries out the message or Will of God in the world of man. He feels that in the circumstances of his times, he has been commanded to perform a task. We are inclined to disagree with this view expressed by Bergson and others. For, our study leads us to an entirely different conclusion. We do not find that there is anything common between the two paths. It is not, as Bergson calls it, that one is a halfway mysticism and the other is a full-fledged one. Nor is it that one mystic remains absorbed in the mystic bliss of union or merger and the other returns with a command and mission to fulfil. We have found that from the very start and in every respect the approach to life, the discipline and the goal of the two systems are radically different. It is not that

for a distance the two traverse the same road and after it they part company. The two groups have *ab initio* different directions, and even opposing aims and objectives. In short, they have wholly contrasted world-views.

Religious experience and psychology

Both the introvertive mystic groups accept the view that mystic consciousness is entirely different from the normal 'I', or ego-consciousness of man. All great mystics deny that mystic experience is a function of the normal ego-consciousness. Time and again the mystics assert that all our maladies and conflicts are due to the failings of the ego-consciousness. The way out of it is to transcend this limit and to establish a communion with God or Reality. This way one develops a supra-consciousness. As such, any study of the 'I' consciousness cannot lead to understanding of the mystic consciousness. Psychology like all other branches of knowledge belong to the sphere of the mechanical and the deterministic. But, mysticism is free and creative. It is not a phase, an aspect or the integration of his normal consciousness. It is, accordingly, believed to be nonsensory. For the same reason, all nature or extrovert mysticism is excluded from the category of true mysticism. While Nature mysticism is amoral, true mysticism is highly ethical and moral. Real mystic consciousness is constant, certain and confident. Unlike the moods of the normal consciousness, it does not vary or waver. Since it is a direct apprehension of Reality, mysticism yields real knowledge or truth as against mere opinions, which is the best the normal psyche can achieve. Unlike the ordinary mortal, the mystic gains a certitude and an unswerving conviction. This consciousness is a dynamic and creative movement of Truth. The mystic joins this flow as an awakened agent. Against this, a body of thinkers holds that mystic consciousness is not non-sensory. It involves only the experiences of the ordinary human psyche. The claims of the mystics have been disputed by them. Stace lists the following characteristics of the Introvertive and the Extrovertive mysticisms.

Introvertive mysticism	*Extrovertive mysticism*
1. The unitary consciouness, the One, the Void, the pure or the Universal Consciousness.	1. Unifying vision—all things are one.
2. Non spatial and non-temporal.	2. The apprehension of the One as the inner life of all things.

3. Sense of objectivity or reality.	3. Sense of objectivity or reality.
4. Blessedness, peace, etc.	4. Blessedness, peace, etc.
5. Feeling of holy or divine.	5. Feeling of holy or divine.
6. Paradoxicality	6. Paradoxicality.
7. Ineffability	7. Ineffability.

The above list shows[9] that five of the seven characteristics are common to both the types of mysticism. The commonness of the features of these two mysticisms would suggest that both the varieties of mysticism belong to the same class. The claim of the non-sensory character of the introvertive mysticism would, thus, appear to be invalid. For, Extrovertive mysticism is just an experience of the normal psyche; few persons have claimed it to be a higher kind of mysticism.

We have to see how the above analysis compares with the claims of the mystics who exclude these flashy and casual experiences (Extrovertive mysticism) from the class of true mysticism. Even Stace believes : "These facts seem to suggest that the extrovertive mysticism, although we recognize it as a distinct type, is actually on a lower level than the introvertive type; that is to say, it is as an incomplete kind of experience which finds its completion and fulfilment in the introvertive kind of experience." But, for the introvertive mysticism Stace too concedes that it is a function of the Higher Universal Consciousness or Mind. It is an experience of "the Unitary Consciousness, the One, the Void, the Pure Universal Consciousness. This experience is non-spacial and non-temporal."[10] It is true that some mystics the world over have described this experience of the Universal Entity in somewhat contradictory terms. They have called the Reality as Personal and Impersonal, with and without Attributes, Active and Inactive, One and Many. All attempts of the philosophers to comprehend and resolve these apparently paradoxical statements have been inadequate. But, these seeming conflicts in the statements of the mystics have never bothered them nor stopped them from repeating those apparent contradictions. A modern philosopher like Suzuki openly asserts that "it is a state of absolute emptiness which is absolute fullness."[11] Probably this is the reason why some critics consider mystical experience as purely subjective or even hallucinatory.

The logical laws apply to the world of multiplicity. They explain the order of relations between different objects. These laws, Stace feels, cannot apply to a Unity. In the pure Unity there

is nothing to explain. There being no multiplicity, the question of any order or relations in a Unity does not arise. The Unity can only be experienced. It cannot be understood intellectually, nor can its paradoxes be solved by the laws and logic of multiplicity. Logical understanding can never comprehend the Ultimate, the Unity. Even to call it paradoxical is to apply to it our logical categories. This is inadmissible. To say that "It is" or "It is not" is again to define it in terms of the categories of multiplicity. These are not relevant to Unity. The very idea of order or disorder applies to a multiplicity so as to specify the order of relations with a view to identifying and determining the multiple objects. In undifferentiated Unity there is no second and the problem of order does not arise. The mystic experience cannot be reduced to a subjective-objective relation, because there is no 'other object' or multiplicity. It is not even a subjective experience since it is not disorderly. Even a disorder will assume a multiplicity. Hence, the experience can only be trans-subjective. Secondly, there being the pure unity of the individual self, there is no principle of individuation on which there can be a distinction between one self and the other self. "Therefore, we cannot stop at the individual ego, but are logically compelled to pass on to a Universal Self." Thirdly, the experience is 'Self-transcending', and trans-subjectivity is a part of the experience and not an interpretation. It is, therefore, indubitable. The mystics too stress that it is an experience, not an interpretation. For these three reasons, Stace concludes that the mystic experience is trans-subjective.[12]

William James mentions four principal characteristics of the mystic experience. This consciousness, he concludes, is ineffable, transient, passive and noetic.[13] Mystics, the world over, have declared the ineffability of the mystic experience. But, transiency is not a feature of every mystic experience. In fact, all prophetic mystics have claimed a permanent union with God. Nor is passivity or inactivity a characteristic of the prophetic mystic consciousness. On the contrary, it is highly creative. Passivity in the sense of peace and poise, and of the suspension of the ego-consciousness, is of course present. Passivity is certainly a feature of the quietist mystic experience, but not of the experience of the activist mystics. The noetic character of the mystic experience also suggests that in essence the experience is directive. Most of the cases studied by William James, before he delivered his Gifford lectures, were those of the semi-active mystics. In their case the noetic element ultimately fructifies in the creative field. But the quietist mystic

experience is neither noetic nor conative.

Both Stace and William James have not mentioned love as the essential feature of the mystic experience. But, the Sikh Gurus are emphatic in asserting love as the primary element of their mysticism. Friends ask me what is the mark of the Lord. He is All Love, rest He is ineffable. Bergson, too, has indicated it as the principal characteristic of Activity mysticism. Love as an attribute is all-embracing in its character. It has four clear aspects. It is dynamic, directive, creative and the fount of all moral values. That is the chief reason why prophetic mystics are highly creative and altruistic in their behaviour. These four features of the mystic life are not just incidental or the result of their personal or cultural backgrounds. They are the natural and compulsive effects of their consciousness itself. The prophetic mystic experience is revelatory and illuminating ; it supplies judgments. It leads and enlightens the mystic. The Gurus go to the length of calling God as the Enlightener. In Christianity and Islam too God has been referred to as Light. The experience of the mystic makes him wise. The directive aspect of the experience involves both knowledge and activity, viz., the noetic and the conative elements. Equally evident is the dynamic or the creative aspect of love. The very idea of the Will of God emphasises, on the one hand, its authority and certitude, and, on the other, its directive and creative character. In addition, love also expresses the cohesive and unitive aspect of the mystic experience. For, love has a highly attributive facet. This conveys two things ; the great stress laid by the prophetic mystics, first, on the altruistic and moral activity as a discipline both for the mystic and the seeker, and, second, on the attributive aspect of God. As against it, the Quietists describe Reality or Godhead generally in negative terms like Void, Nothingness, Desert, and without Attributes. It is important to understand that whereas all prophetic mystics emphasise these four features of their mystic experience, these are significantly absent from the description given by the Quietists.

We find that in listing the characteristics of Introvertive mysticism, Stace has completely missed the fundamental feature of prophetic mysticism, namely, universal love. Having ignored it, he neither mentions nor explains the dynamic and directive character of Introvertive mysticism. The reason for it is obvious. His examination has mainly been confined to the mystical experience of the Quietists. In his entire book on the subject of mysticism, he has not cited even a single instance from those we call prophetic

mystics. All his references are to quietist mystics. They believe in virtual withdrawal from life. Their attitude to the world, in the language of Schweitzer, is of indifference, if not of apathy, to a life-affirming and ethical interpretation of the will-to-live. The entire flow of the two introvertive mystic movements is not only in different areas but in opposite directions. One is the group of mystics who carry out the Will of God, through the medium of His Love. The other is the group wanting to return to a state which is beyond time and definition, beyond the categories of existence and non-existence. These mystics want to revert to the original 'idea' in God from which they emanated. Such a reversionary trend is foreign to the activist mystics. Their mode of functioning and goal is through the expression of love. Therefore, any conclusions about the characteristics of mysticism which do not take into consideration the experiences and views of activist mystics, must, on that account, remain incomplete and invalid.

All consciousness is, according to one view, a centre of organisation. This forms the basis of the Cartesian principle, 'I think, therefore, I am'. There is ample evidence to suggest that the contribution of prophetic mystics to the course of history has been colossal, especially in the field of ethics. But for them, our faith in the value and validity of ethics would have been for too shaky. They have sought to establish the necessity and the reality of the moral life. It is the unanimous view of these prophetic mystics that ego-consciousness, if allowed to run its own way, becomes the bane of all social life. It is possible, they believe, to supplant it and develop a higher centre of consciousness and organisation. This is what they have asserted repeatedly. This is the problem of man. In supermanship lies the hope and salvation of man and the solution of his problems of insecurity, egoism, conflict and purposelessness. It would not be possible to explain the monumental role of prophetic mystics in history, except on the assumption of their being the centres of higher consciousness and organisation, distinctly superior to the ego-consciousness of the ordinary man which is self-centred.

These activity mystics assert that their experience has a personal character too. It is something as between 'You' and 'I'. Yet, this experience does not belong to the order of multiplicity or the objective world. It is an experience of the Unity. But, fundamentally, it is a dynamic movement of activity. This is its most important feature. The moment one is in tune with Him, one falls in line with Him. One plays the role of love. Unlike the objective

world, higher mystic experience does not supply data, it supplies an illuminating consciousness. It is both directive and creative. It is not a relation between two independent entities or centres of consciousness. Otherwise it would be a subjective-objective relation of the order of multiplicity. The "I" consciousness is, in a way, suspended. Here the being is with a 'new' or 'supra-consciousness'. He is entirely under the creative direction of the Unity, the Universal Consciousness or God. "Any one who understands His order would not talk of the ego-consciousness."[14] This is what the mystics feel and say about it. This is their stand.

We do not in the least say that mystic utterances should settle psychological issues. But, prophetic mystics make repeated assertions about the suppression of the ego-consciousness, the development of a higher centre of consciousness and the intuitive experience of Unity or Order wholly paradoxical to us. In the face of all this, it would, perhaps, be too hasty and dogmatic a step to dismiss their views as mere figments of imagination, and to claim the identity of all mysticism or that the prophetic mystic experience is the function of the normal psyche.

Religion and philosophy

On the issue of philosophy there is considerable variation among the mystics. It is more so among the philosophers of different schools of mysticisms. It is not our object to resolve those differences. We shall only restate them and attempt to find out if there is an intimate relation between the kind of mysticism and the philosophy it lays down.

Broadly speaking mystics contribute to four kinds of philosophies, (1) Dualism, (2) Monism, (3) Pantheism, and (4) Theism. We have divided mystics among two major categories, the Quietists and the Activists.

It is true that from the experiences and statements of the first group of mystics, philosophers have drawn very different metaphysical theories. At one end are Dualists believing in the co-eternal character of matter and the spirit. The mystical aim of these Indian Dualists is to secure the isolation of the spiritual element from its bondage with matter. The position is the same in Yoga where even some kind of a God is also assumed. Here too, after the mystic achievement, the spiritual element remains aloof. The position of God is neither fundamental nor integral to the system.

Then there are the *Upanisads*. There quietism is not in doubt. But, the views embodied in them have been construed to support

different metaphysical interpretations. From them Sankara derived his pure monism. Ramanuja sought to construct a pantheism with the individual soul and the insensate world as the attributes of the Supreme Soul. Further, Madhva drew a somewhat theistic dualism from the *Upanisads.*

The doctrines of Buddha too have been variously interpretted by Buddhist philosophers. Hinayanists believed in a Transcendent Reality. Though they recommended escape from the compounded world of suffering, they did not completely downgrade its reality. But Nagarjuna went to the extreme of monism. He declared the world to be an illusion even though Mahayana contributed to the ideal of *Boddhisattva* for alleviating human suffering. Suzuki's interpretation of Mahayana and Zen Buddhism is still different. In his book *Mysticism, Buddhist and Christian,* he draws a close parallel between the metaphysical views of Eckhart and the position of Mahayana. For him Sunyata is a dynamic Reality. "This is why Sunyata is said to be a reservoir of infinite possibilities and not just a state of mere emptiness. Differentiating itself, and yet remaining in itself undifferentiated, and thus to go on eternally in the work of creation....we can say of it that it is a creation out of nothing. Sunyata is not to be conceived statically but dynamically, or better at once static and dynamic."[15]

Similarly, among Christian mystics, where the religious and cultural tradition is the same, Eckhart presents a virtual pantheism. Even a modern critic like Stace attributes a pantheistic view to Eckhart. In the same way, mystics like Nicholas, Boehme and Law contribute to a pantheistic view. Neoplatonism has been quite common among Christian mystics. But mystics like St. John of Cross, Suso and Ruysbroeck have taken a distinctly theistic line.

Among Sufis too, Neoplatonism and Pantheism have virtually been accepted by a large number of them. But most Sufis, including Al Ghazali, have strictly followed the Islamic tradition of theism, though withdrawal from the world has been a common feature of all Sufism.

This is a brief statement of the metaphysical views of the quietist mystics. Evidently, on this issue, there is not much unanimity among them. There are utterances by them, and sometimes by the same mystic, which are liable to opposing interpretations.

Before we state the views of activist mystics, we may record the views of Stace who believes that all mystic experiences lead to only one mataphysical interpretation. In order to arrive at his

conclusion, he has taken a very broad spectrum of views regarding mystics experiences in the East and the West. Of course, these instances are confined to the quietist mystics only. We have already mentioned Stace's view that the mystical experience being an experience of a Unity, the logic and order of multiplicity are inapplicable to it. All our problems of defining the metaphysical position, he feels, arise from our wrong insistence on applying the logic of multiplicity to a Unity and then feeling baffled about it. The mystics describe their experience in contradictory terms, of the Reality being both One and Many, Personal and Impersonal. In repeating these paradoxical statements, the mystic is true to his experience. He is conscious that his actual experience, seen in the light of the logic of multiplicity, is self-contradictory. It is this paradoxicality of his experience which makes him proclaim that the experience is ineffable and cannot be expressed in the rational language. Actually, the experience is neither ineffable nor difficult to express in language. It is only paradoxical. But this paradoxicality expresses the truth of his mystic experience. Stace continues that we too should be bold enough to accept the mystic's conclusion that the Reality is paradoxical. From this he suggests that Reality, as described by the mystics, is both identical with and, at the same time, distinct from the world. This metaphysical statement, paradoxical as it is, he calls pantheism. He concludes that all mystical experiences can lead to only one metaphysical interpretation, namely, that Reality is pantheistic in the sense that it is both identical with and distinct from the world.[16]

The metaphysical stand of the prophetic mystics is entirely different. Unfortunately Stace did not use their views and sayings to draw his conclusion. In contrast with the Quietists, we find almost a complete identity of views among the prophetic mystics. All of them put considerable stress on this aspect of their views. For Christ, Mohammad and the Sikh Gurus, Reality is creative and the world is His Creation. The Creator has a Will which works in the world. There is a distinction between the Creator and the creature, whose highest role is to be the instrument of His Will. Prayer is an essential component of the relation between man and God, who is both Personal and with Attributes. He is basically and primarily a God of Will, Love and Grace. Hence the significance of ethics, moral living and the world. In sum, the prophetic mystics proclaim a theism. There is, evidently, a clear and fundamental link between the metaphysical views of these mystics and their approach to the world and life. Their world-view is ethical and life-

affirming. This explains their role in life. They could not call Him a God of Will and Love and be inactive and indifferent to the world. Their mission emanates from their mystical experience and so does all their activity.

The stress laid by these mystics on some aspects of their world and metaphysical view is so great that one could not call their differences with the Quietists as just incidental or minor. For Christ the difference between the Creator and the creature and God's Will and his own will was so cardinal that before his crucification he prayed for God's Will being done and not his own. Later, this gave rise to the doctrine of creation *ex-nihilo.* Whether or not this doctrine is logical and intellectually satisfying is beside the point. But, it reflects the fundamental tenet of the Christian metaphysical and mystical views. The same difference between God and man was emphasised by Prophet Mohammad in his declaration of God being purely Transcendent and there being a clear gap between the Creator and the creature. The Sikh Gurus are also doubly emphatic on this metaphysical issue. Hinduism had accepted the doctrine of Avatarhood and declared Buddha also an Avatar. Buddhism too contributed to the doctrine of *Trikaya,* Three Bodies of Buddha, the first of *Dharmakaya* (Essence-body), the second of *Sambhogakaya* (Heavenly body of Bliss) and the third of *Nirmanakaya* (the visible individual Buddha on earth). But, the Sikh Gurus say that cursed by the man who says that God takes the human form. We agree that even according to the prophetic mystics Reality has a paradoxical face. But, that shows the incomprehensibility of God and the inadequacy of our intellect, or may be, what Stace calls the inapplicability of the logic and language of multiplicity to a Unity.

The contrast between the metaphysical stands of the two groups of mysticism, the Quietists and the Activists, and their practical approach to the world, is so great that it is impossible to advance the view, much less to sustain it, that these two groups are identical in kind. In no sense can these deep differences be ascribed to historical or environmental causes. In fact, quietist and activist mystics, with a common religious and environmental background, have given rise to quite variant and even opposing metaphysical views. Evidently, these wide differences can be traced only to the character of the mystical experience itself.

How do we explain the variety of views among the Quietists ? In a large number of cases these disagreements follow the personal prejudices and predilections of the philosophers themselves. For,

the same body of mystic utterances have been interpreted in a contrasted manner by Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim philosophers. A typical instance is a passage (referred to by us earlier) by Eckhart about his mystic experience. Dean Inge quotes it to show conclusively that the msytic held a theistic and not a pantheistic view and denied the identity of man and God. Suzuki cites the same passage to prove the close similarity of Eckhart's metaphysical views with those of Zen Buddhism. He goes a step further and says that Eckhart only described a Zen Satori which he had experienced then. Again, the very passage has been used by Stace to establish that the mystic believed in pantheism, involving that God is both identical with and different from the world.[17]

Apart from the personal preference of philosophers for their own points of view, Al Ghazali gives another reason for these variations. He says that in the final mystic experience, the mystic is not only unconscious of himself but even of his own union with God. Therefore, all his subsequent utterances are sheer interpretations and effusive babblings.[18]

Allied with Al Ghazali's arguments there is, we feel, a third reason too. With the Quietist mystics, their experience is a tranquil state of bliss as an end in itself. Their Mysticism is a march to static enlightenment. It is entirely different with the prophetic mystics, whose experience is fundamentally dynamic and directive. The prophetic mystic has a compulsion to translate it into activity. His experience is a part of the continuous process of creativity. To the extent he is a conscious tool of the creative process, his own role in the world becomes clear to him. His experience gives him a clear and operative world-view. His is a realisation of Truth by living Truth. Further this realisation directs him to live a creative existence. He becomes a live wire for the creative flow of energy and love. His aim is not to evolve a metaphysical solution. But he gets an intuitive knowledge and direction of the part he has to play. He is filled with energy and confidence. His is a knowledge gained from being the creative instrument of God. That is why we find among prophetic mystics, appearing in different climes and continents, a clarity and an uncommon unanimity in their world-view and approach to life. But, with the Quietists the position is different. Their experience is fully satisfying to them. The Reality remains incomprehensible and paradoxical to them. In comparative terms their experience has practically no conative content or impact. The noetic is not enlightened by the conative. The intuitive

vision is not enriched by the clarity which the creative activity brings to it. We do not say it is half-way mysticism. But, the conclusion is inevitable that it is an entirely dissimilar experience, less expressive of a clear world-view. That is why, when Quietist mystics describe their mystic experience, it lends itself to differing interpretations.

Unless mysticism is believed to be a purely subjective hallucination, it would be highly conjectural to suggest that utterances of mystics are influenced by the historical background. There is no evidence so far to indicate that the mystical growth is the product of the environmental or deterministic factors. Far from being the instruments of history, actually it is the prophetic mystics who have made history and determined its course.

Accordingly, we arrive at the only valid conclusion that there are different kinds of mystical experiences. The disagreements in the world-views of the mystics arise directly from their experiences and their fundamental characteristics. It would be quite unfair to dismiss the clear and categoric statements of the mystics and to rush to the inference that those are prejudiced by the environmental factors. It would be better to shed our own prejudices than to attribute supposed ones to the mystics.

Religion and ethics

The question whether ethics and mysticism are closely linked and whether the latter is the source of all ethics has been answered differently by the two mystic groups we have indentified.

The Quietists are indifferent to an active ethical life. True, other-worldliness and monasticism do not suggest any immoral or unethical living. In all quietist mystic systems purity of personal conduct is an essential step towards salvation and the mystic achievement. As in the Hinayana, it is a single-line system of personal morality and clean behaviour. There is no vicarious liability or responsibility. Except for the purpose of personal progress and spiritual elevation, moral life *per se* has no meaning. In some ascetic systems a good deed hinders the spiritual growth. It is harmful both to the benefactor and the beneficiary. With other Quietists life itself is an evil and a suffering. Moral acts can bear a better fruit in the next birth but they can never lead to the mystic height. Still others find ethical life to be an avoidable distraction and a deviation from the spiritual path. For some life itself has no reality. As such, moral activities lose all meaning. It cannot be denied that socio-ethical activity is avoided by the Quietist. In any

case, ethical life is at best only incidental to the Spiritual growth. It never forms an essential part of the mystic's discipline and life. That is why in Stace's list of the essential features of the Introvertive mystic experience of the Quietists, love finds no mention at all. The end achievement is the mystic experience and the bliss it entails. Sankara despised the ideal of activity. On the other hand, the Activists and their protagonists have often dubbed as selfish, the quietist goal of enjoying the mystical bliss as an end in itself. For, love is active.

For the Activist, love is a fundamental feature of his mystic experience. It is an integral part of his life, both during the mystic training and after the achievement. And love is the mother of all values and virtues. God is all Love and the Ocean of virtues. 'He who loves knows God', says Guru Gobind Singh. According to the Mahayana *Prajana* (intuitive experience) arouses *Karuna* (compassion). The *Boddhisattva* ideal suggests an intimate link between mysticism and ethics. The service of man forms the very basis of the mystic's discipline, achievement and life. Stace, who classifies all Introvertive mysticism into one category, concedes that the ultimate source of all ethics is mysticism.[19] Out of it flow all moral feelings and values. And, yet, Stace never mentions love as the essential feature of the mystic experience.

It is the ego feeling which creates all separation and conflicts and "Hobbe's war of all against all". The prophetic mystic insists on the elimination of egoism as the crucial step for gaining the mystical experience. In fact, the two events are simultaneous. The mystical experience generates the sense of unity, love and kinship with all. It secures the basis of all moral functioning.

The universe being the creation of God, all ethical values and the basic kinship of all life are inherent in the very essence of it. It is through the mystical experience that a person awakes to this reality and fulfils in activity his realised affinity with all beings. Love is thus "a dim groping towards the disappearance of the individuality in the Universal Self which is a part of the essence of mysticism."[20] The divine spark is present in all of us. We have only to kindle it and forge our link with God. Through love we awaken love. By this mystical union we are no longer deceived by the empirical ego. The unity underlying all life is established as a living reality. The Pure or Universal Ego comes into operation through the individual. The mystic is flushed with light, wisdom and love. He is no longer the empirical ego. He is the medium of the Super-Ego. God's love for all men manifests itself through

him. Once love is awakened, this 'Consciousness should be for those who possess it, a powerful motive and impulsion towards ethical and therefore towards social action.[21] Such are the views of the Activists. This position is entirely different from that of all the Quietists.

Again the question arises, are the two types of mysticism identical in their nature? Could an identical mystical experience impel one mystic to dedicate all for the service of man and leave the other entirely indifferent, if not cold, to the problems of struggling humanity? If the experiences were the same and essentially generative of love, could the enlightened mystic ignore the demands of the moral life as are accepted by the prophetic mystic? The conclusion is inevitable that the mystical path and the mystical experience of the two groups are neither identical nor similar. For the Activist, mysticism in its essence is love which is the driving force of all moral life. As such, we cannot escape the inference that there is a wide gap between the two types of mysticism. At least on the ethical plane there is hardly any meeting ground between them. To us it appears that from the very start there is a clear divergence of paths between the two mystic groups. The gap is far from narrowed even after the mystic achievement. In fact, even the directions become entirely different. The one flows into life and enriches it. The other traverses the field of blessedness and remains merged in it.

Historically, one point is very significant. Quietist mystics have mostly followed the appearance of a prophetic mystic. This has been the case with Christian mystics and Sufis. But, never in the history of mysticism has a prophetic mystic traced his lineage or experience to a quietist or a similar mystic growth. This fact proves two points. First, that prophetic mysticism is not a historical growth influenced by environmental factors. Secondly, that the activist mystic experience is a phenomenon not at all similar to the quietist mystic experience, so as to be understood by it or related to it. It is an entirely independent and new phenomenon or experience.

The Indian Religious tradition

No understanding and appreciation of Sikhism is possible unless one has a clear and proper picture of the religious doctrines and thought that had been accepted and the traditions and trends that had been established in the country, before Guru Nanak appeared on the scene.

We have broadly considered the chief religious systems that had been practised in India. It will be useful to have a rapid glance at them in their historical perspective. This will help us to know whether these Indian religions have common essentials and affinities with each other. We shall try to see if the similarities among them are close and strong enough to justify our classifying them in a single group of mysticism. Thirdly, we shall also consider if their common characteristics have a compulsive bearing on their attitude towards society, the social structure and its ethics. Lastly, we shall find out if the characteristics of these mystic system have changed over the centuries, or these have continuously been maintained in their original purity. All this will enable us to compare and contrast them with Sikhism and draw our conclusions. We shall crave the indulgence of the reader if, for this purpose, we have to recapitulate some of the material already considered.

India had its old pre-Aryan culture called the *Sramanik* tradition. Its religious systems like Jainism, Samkhya and Yoga were generally dualistic and pluralistic. The world was considered real but it had been rejected as a bondage. The ideal was the isolation (*Kaivalya*) or complete passivity of the spiritual monad. With the influx and invasion of the extrovert Aryans, near about 1000-1500 B.C.,[22] appeared the *Rig Vedic* tradition. Compared to the earlier tradition, the Aryans had entirely a different outlook and attitude towards life. They believed in having the good things of the world and enjoying its pleasures by propitiating the gods and performing the prescribed sacrifices and rituals.

By the sixth century B.C.,[23] arose two new religious systems, apparently in line with the two traditions mentioned above. Whether there was any intermingling of these two traditions is beside the point. The *Upanisads* propounded the concepts of *Brahman* and connected doctrines. This mystic teaching was open only to a few. The entire system was quietist, other-worldly and meditational.

In the same century arose Buddhism with the ideal of *Nirvana* as the goal of life. The world was considered impermanent and a suffering. After Buddha, the Hinayana, with its scriptures in Pali, became the chief religion of the country, particularly in the south. Later, the Mahayana took roots mainly in the north of India.

In the *Vedic* stream of thought, *Vedanta*, with Gaudapada and Sankara as its chief exponents, has continued to be the primary and authentic interpretation of the *Vedas* and *Upanisads*. It is

deemed to be 'above all the philosophy of India'.[24] Since the beginning of the *Upanisadic* tradition, the quietist ideal has reigned supreme in India. Whatever be the apparent differences in the metaphysical positions and allied issues, in practice and in essence all subsequent Hindu systems have had considerable unanimity in their approach to life and their ideals.

A close look at these two systems reveals that, despite the seeming variations, there is, in essentials, a lot common between Buddhism and the Vedanta. Both the Buddha and Sankara exclude any reconciliation between religion and the world. Both want to avoid the world or the becoming state. They find no hope for the worldly life. The Buddha rejects it as evil and the *Mayavadins* spurn it as unreal.[25] Like the Buddhist *Nirvana*, Brahman alone is real and free from the becoming world. The *Upanisads* constantly and continuously stress that salvation is won by knowledge alone and that all else is merely preliminary. 'Of a truth, O Gargi,' says Yajnavalkya, himself a hermit, 'he who does not know this imperishable One, though in this world he should distribute alms and practice penance (*tapas tapyate*) for many a thousand years, thereby wins but finite good.'[26] This world-view finds a logical and natural expression in monasticism and puritanism. For the Buddha there could be no liberation for those living a normal life. Nor does he believe that unattached action can lead to salvation.[27] For him, like Sankara and the *Upanisads*, the *Jnana-marga* is the only method of liberation.[28] Metaphysically, too, for Buddhism the only reality is Void; for Vedanta it is Brahman. The Void is, in a way, indistinguishable from Brahman. Both can be described only in negative terms like 'not this, not this'. The rest is all impermanent and unreal. Naturally, monasticism, ascetism and withdrawal from the phenomenal world are recommended as the only available methods of salvation.[29] Celibacy was essential for the *Bhikshu*. The *Upanisad* teaching was not dissimilar. "They longed not for descendants, and said : "Why should we wish indeed for descendants, we whose self is the universe ?" They wandered as beggars, for longing for children was indeed longing for the world.[30] In Buddhism, Vedanta and Samkhya pleasure and pain are both a suffering.

The goal of life is *Nirvana* in Buddhism; it is Brahman in Vedanta. The final state of achievement in Vedanta is described thus, "As rivers run and in the deep lose name and form and disappear, so goes, form name and form released, the wise man to the deity." "Then the father is not father, nor the mother, mother,

nor the worlds, worlds." "Then is he unmoved by good, unmoved by evil," "He stands in the tumultuous ocean as beholder, alone and without a second." "Brahman is he and into Brahman he resolves himself."[31] "Of this liberation the natural fruit in this life is asceticism."[32] The *Jivan-mukta* has no role to perform in life. His former works are burnt away in the fire of knowledge. "He knows his body is not his body. When he dies, his self goes nowhere, where it is not already." Never does he again become subject to the limitation of individual existence.[33] This is the state of the ideal life. The liberated one can do any evil or sin with impunity, for knowledge protects him from its consequences. Moral conduct is not characteristic of the *Jivan-mukta*. He is a despot with unlimited power and sanction to do and eat anything he wants and to assume any shape he likes.[34]

On the socio-physical plane, the system of four castes was accepted. It had been scripturally sanctioned by the *Vedas*. A *Sudra* could be killed at will.[35] Later this caste system was also approved by the *Upanisads*.

The epics also fully endorse the sanctity of the caste structure. They made the boundaries of the caste system quite sacrosanct. Lord Rama removed the head of a *Sudra* for indulging in religious rites forbidden to his caste.[36] Lord Krishna completely upheld the then existing social structure. In order to reap the benefits of unattached action one had to work within the prescribed social spheres.

As a synthesising measure, the *Bhagavad Gita* had introduced the Bhagavata system of worship in the mainstream of Hinduism. In this context and as a consequence, women and *Sudras* too were allowed the concession of performing the worship of the Lord.

The Buddha and Vedanta held out no hope of liberation for the worldly life. The *Bhagavad Gita* made a significant departure from them. It promised salvation to the householder, provided he worked within the frame-work of the hierarchical caste system and did one's own caste duties without any motive or attachment.[37] In this manner the *Gita* gave full religious sanction and validity to the caste system. This gave a spiritual status to the social stratification. Like the course of the stars, the order and rank of the caste were eternal. There was no escape from them. For, man's low caste position was not an accident of birth. It was the inexorable result of his own evil deeds in the previous births. He evoked no sympathy from the society, for he was only suffering for or

struggling to redeem his own sins.[38] For the laity, blind adherence to the caste system became the only mode of spiritual salvation.

The theory of Avatarhood was another synthesising step taken by the authors of Brahminism. Thereby it was sought to absorb within Hinduism not only Buddhism but also heterodox systems like Jainism, Yoga and Samkhya that had denied the very idea of God or Brahman. In fact, for meditational purposes, the methods and mechanics of Yoga have been employed by almost every religious system in India.

Later developed the theistic systems of Vaisnavism and Saivism. They accepted the scriptural authority of the *Vedas* and *Upanisads* and the social system (caste structure) prescribed by them. Though both the systems accepted the path of devotion, in substance they remained other-worldly, formal and ritualistic in their modes of worship.

So whether it was Buddhism, Vedanta or theism, the lowering of the status of the world and the consequent general other-worldliness of approach to life remained, as in the *Sramanik* and the *Upanisadic* traditions, the fundamental governing principle of all these religious systems.

In this background, no universal ethics accepting the ideas of the brotherhood and equality of man could arise and develop, such concepts being contrary to the mystic commands of the scriptures. Even the *Bhagavad Gita*, which gave some status to the worldly life, forbade mobility between the different castes. Salvation could be possible by selflessly doing the duties of only one's own caste and not those of any other caste.

A modern scholar like Coomaraswamy believes that Brahminhood by birth is the most practical method of securing, in the affairs of the world, the guidance of the wisest. According to him, the world has yet to devise a better way of accomplishing such an objective. Because of their achievement and character, the Indian Brahmins, he feels justifiably deserve the respect the system gives them.[39] He seems fully to justify the hierarchical caste system, for he calls the books and epics that approve of it as the Utopias of Valmiki, Vyasa and Manu.[40]

Be that as it may, the religious and the discriminatory character of the caste structure and the general other-worldliness of the system entirely excluded the growth of any sound social ethics, much less of a humanistic one guaranteeing the equality of man. In fact, the hierarchical character of the social structure became an integral component of the spiritual system. The authors

of the Vedic Age consider the ethical system of Vedic Brahmanas as unworthy. The doctrine of *Maya* and other-worldliness had had its full toll in sapping the vitality of the people and turning their thoughts into arid and dismal pessimism. The supreme objective of unity with Brahman being attainable through cognition, all secular activities, good or bad, had to be given up, being illusory and an impediment in the achievement of the only useful goal. All this caused in the Indian mind an utter contempt for this world and life. This complete disregard of social well-being led to an increasing rigidity in the caste system, causing a serious deterioration in the position of Vaishyas and Sudras and also of women who, in the course of time, came to be classed with them.[41] Keith, who has made a detailed study of the subject, also finds the ethics of the *Vedas* and the *Upanisads* as far from helpful.[42] In the Vedic system, the exactitude of the ritual was alone of any value. Untruth was a 'hole in the voice' which could be rectified by adding a 'syllable to a verse'.[43]

The Mahayana like the *Bhagavad Gita*, tended to widen its circle of devotees. It tried to tackle the religious problem of the laity and to bring them within its fold. But, obviously, in so doing, it could not go beyond the limits laid by the fundamental teachings of Buddha and his *Anicca* and *Anatta* doctrines. Though the *Bodhisattva* doctrine was initiated, the reality of the world was denied by the philosophers of the Mahayana. The Buddha had found the condition of the world to be irremediable, it being only a suffering.

Another factor that contributed to the general negation and the other-worldliness of the Indian view of life was its idea of the soul. In the Vedic time, the individual soul was considered to have a distinct entity. It returned to the world after exhausting the merits of its good deeds in heaven. In Jainism, Samkhya and Yoga, though they all accepted the concept of a soul, the goal of life was to secure its permanent isolation by its rescue from the world. The idea never contributed to the value and status of the individual in life. The position definitely worsened in the systems of the *Upanisads* and the Buddha. The latter categorically denied the idea of soul in its *Anatta* doctrine. It was all a becoming without any permanent entity.

Similarly, the *Upanisads* and *Vedanta* reject the idea of a separate and independent soul. Everything is Brahman. There is no reality outside it. Brahman alone is real. No one is born, no one dies. There is nothing like an individual being or a soul as

separate from Brahman. In this view the cosmic play virtually dehumanises and downgrades the individual personality. It has no contribution to make by way of self-expression and self-discovery, a path opposed to the pursuit of union with Brahman. This method needs the annihilation of the human personality. Man, a bubble in the magic play, was at every step a pitiable target of mockery by *Maya*.[44] During a discussion with her husband, Yudhishthira's wife came to the conclusion that even God treated a person capriciously and without consideration.[45] The self as an individual was never recognised as real. Consequently, it could have no say or responsibility in doing good or evil, the real actor being the Mayic Brahman.[46]

All this naturally denuded not only the status and sanctity of the world and life, but also of the individual who in every social system forms the unit of organisation and the measure of all ethics. The idea of a soul was all a delusion that had to be discarded. This completely knocked out the basis for the independent entity of the individual and the value of human rights and relations. There was no individual whose rights and status had to be safeguarded. No one could invoke religious sanctions for the maintenance of one's supposed human rights. That is the reason why the social system could, with a vengeance, prescribe invidious distinctions between man and man, and severe discriminations against the lower castes and the Sudras. These restrictions were accepted, for they violated no spiritual tenet nor hindered the mystic progress. These led to no adverse spiritual consequence to the religious system. Both from the religious and the social points of view, what was sacrosanct was the caste structure and not the individual, since there was really no such entity. There was nothing like a soul. As such, it hardly mattered whether or not the social system was hierarchical and discriminatory in its dispensation.

This is probably the reason that the Buddha never cared to attack the general inhumanity of the caste system. He only admitted everyone willing to join his monastic order. Reform of the social system neither bothered nor concerned him.[47]

In the *Bhagavad Gita* there is the idea of a soul. But the soul is never born nor does it die.[48] This idea is quite analogous to the one of Vedantic Brahman. In Ramanuja's system, and in the other so-called theistic systems, where the idea of a soul was accepted, it was only for the purpose of merger in Brahman or union with God, after dissociation from the material world. In each case it was an ideal of retreat from the world. All these systems incontrovert-

ibly prescribed a quietist ideal. Accordingly, no thought could be given to the demands of the individual and his status in society. Such thoughts were really not relevant. The rejection of the idea of a soul had thus enormous religious and social implications, particularly in eroding human rights and dignity. It has been said that this view about the absence of a soul generally forms the common philosophical basis of a great part of Eastern and Western mysticisms.[49] This may be true only of the pantheistic or monistic systems, or of the Quietists for whom the individual has no active or creative role to play.

In the systems that accepted the scriptual authority of the *Vedas* and *Upanisads*, all one had to do was to perform one's caste duties. None of the Indian systems accepted the creative value of life and the independent status of the individual. World involvement for a spiritual purpose never became the objective of any of them. This position, we have seen, has remained conspicuously and characteristically the same even among modern Hindu mystic. Evidently, it is the mystic experience of a person that shapes and governs his views and not the environment. Summing up the position, a modern scholar writes : "In the long and varied history of Hinduism three types of fellowship with the eternal can be distinguished : (a) the self-glorification of a Yogi trying to realise the eternal and spiritual essence of his individual self in all solitude by means of rigorous asceticism, training and mental exercise; (b) the self-illumination of a non-dualist who attempts to behold 'the non-two-ness' of all that exists in identity with his ultimate self, realised as the universal, eternal, and unique Being by means of what he calls higher wisdom; and (c) the self-surrender of God-lover in the loving devotion to a personal God, who tries to achieve union with God in a spirit of love and dedication."[50] All these systems were quietist.

Before the advent of Guru Nanak, there had also been a few other religious growths. Of them the Radical Bhakti school has been considered already. These mystics were all Quietists. Undoubtedly their system had greater affinity with Indian Sufism, than with contemporary Vaisnavism. Some of these mystics even rapudiated a few of the important beliefs of the Vaisnava. They denied the authority of the *Vedas*, the sanctity of the caste structure, the doctrine of Avatarhood and the formalism of Vaisnava worship. But, like all Quietists, these mystics remained wholly confined to matters of personal salvation, unconcerned with the general problems of life.

In the same period, rather even earlier, Sufism too had taken roots in the country. From the mystic angle there was a lot common between the Sufis and the Radical Bhakti mystics. There is evidence to suggest that Kabir, the greatest of them, had during his early years, prolonged association with the Sufis. But, both in India and outside it, Sufis too has remained a quietist mystic movement.

There was another esoteric religious growth of the Naths in the northern India. These persons constituted a part of the orthodox theistic movements. Their approach and chief religious beliefs bear close resemblance with the broad features of Indian mysticism outlined earlier. Guru Nanak and the other Gurus severly criticised their formalism and other-worldliness as ill-directed and glairingly unworthy of religious persons.

Sikhism, its characteristics, classification and comparison

Characteristics and classifications : In the context of the historical background drawn by us, it would be worthwhile first to record the chief characteristics of Sikhism. It is a gospel which the Gurus have conveyed and illustrated through their own lives. Their message is not an idea but an ideal realised, not a static thought but a dynamic and creative activity, not mere words and wishes expressed but deeds done, not a precept but a practice, not a myth or parable but a truth lived in body and blood.

In Sikhism the fundamental concept is that of God. He is the Creator of the universe and is both Transcendent and Immanent. His Immanence is operative in the world. God is Unfathomable but Ever-creative. He is Unfathomable for we are in the realm of His creation, a becoming universe, and He is entirely different. The rational thought cannot comprehend Him, because the logic and laws governing the becoming world of man are inapplicable to a Being who is 'Wholly Other'. The categories of human and scientific thought are fixed. They are mechanistic, being mere abstractions from what we generally understand to be an objective, relative and determined world of cause and effect. They can never gauge God who is Undetermined, Free, Ever-creative and Ever-fresh. Hence the inherent limitation of the intellect to know Him.

Like all prophetic mystics, the Sikh Gurus did not tend to evolve a metaphysical system. That was not their objective. But, it is important that the Gurus have, with great emphasis and clarity, stated the real role and goal of man and the essentials of their

world-view. On all human and religious issues, viz., on the issue of how to live and establish a creative communion with Him, their hymns and their lives do not leave the least scope of ambiguity.

A question arises whether the knowledge of God is possible. The Gurus reply that the only way to have a consciousness of His Presence is by partaking in His Creative Activity, because He is a God of Will, Attributes and Grace. Creative Love is His Chief Attribute. There is nothing like knowing God. In the case of the Ever-creative God, to do His Will is the only way to know Him, and to know His Will is to carry it out. This is the greatest fundamental of Sikhism. In God's creative movement, deed is knowledge and knowledge is deed; one cannot be divorced from the other. That is why Guru Nanak asks the question, "How to be a truthful being ?", and replies, "By carrying out His Will." Again he says, "I know His Will and carry it out." He neither poses the question of knowing God nor replies to it. Such a question is deemed to be mere sophistry, without any validity. Again, the same idea is stressed by the Guru when he lays down that "living Truth is higher than Truth," or merely knowing Truth as an idea. The very idea of knowledge is static and deterministic. It has no relevance to a Dynamic and Free Being who is not an object in the empirical world. The world being a creative movement, the only true existence is to participate freely and creatively in its expression. That is also the reason that while God and *Naam* are synonymous, the main emphasis in the *Guru Granth* is on union with *Naam*, the Creative Immanence of God.

The world is real because it is the result of the Activity of God who is deeply interested in it. He is engaged in perpetually creating, supervising and directing it through His Will and *Naam*. By despising the world we cannot know Him. That way we miss the only spiritual path open to man. Far from being a place of suffering or evil, the world is the sole arena of God's Creative and Attributive Activity. It has a meaning and a movement. The movement is not chaotic. It has a direction and a purpose. Nor is it governed by a fixed teleology. It is creative. And, creativity involves freedom, an ever-emerging novelty. It is a movement from comparative necessity to comparative freedom, from imperfection to comparatively creative perfection.

The present problems and difficulties of man are due to his Haumen or ignorance in realising the creative unity of life. It is this selfcentredness, imperfection or alienation from the Creative God (*Naam*) that leads to all the evils and conflicts in the society. But,

Haumain can be eliminated and replaced by God-consciousness. The human personality has a spiritual validity. It is man's goal and destiny to grow to the full stature of a soul of higher consciousness. He has to be a *Gurumukh*. In his present form, man's growth is just vegetative. His propensities are largely animal in nature. But, man alone among animal has the capacity and the opportunity to transform himself into a supra-conscious being and establish communion with the Creator. As such, he has also the corresponding moral or spiritual responsibility to be free and creative so as to partake in the Ever-creative Activity of God. That is the only true life, free and blissful. Any other life is animal, artificial and insecure.

As man's malady is his ignorance, his failure to realise the basic brotherhood of man, the road to his further progress lies only through an altruistic life. That alone is creative or spiritual. Man has the choice to secure his freedom by making right decisions. It is "by his deeds and doings that man has been alienated from God."[51] By his deeds he is near or far from God. It is by 'his deeds and virtuous activities alone that he can gain God-consciousness.' So long as man stands alienated from God, his moral life cannot be fully creative and free; nor can his problems, sufferings and insecurity come to an end. A normal life is deemed essential; for it is the sole field for man's moral development and spiritual fulfilment. It is only by the extension of the area of his moral responsibility that man gains spiritual stature. The seeker must react against all encroachments on the moral and creative life of man. His motto is epitomised in the daily greetings of the Sikhs. "We are the workers of God, all victory is of God." He is the "servant" or the "soldier" of God.

The goal of man is to have union with God. The ideal is to gain a higher centre of consciousness and organisation, to be God-conscious, creative, free, spontaneously moral or spiritual. In effect and in essence all these five words refer to the same kind of activity; they are synonymous. The latter can get into relationship with a Higher consciousness. By our ego-centrism we shut out God's Love from entering the portals of our hearts and working through us. One has to open the windows of the intuitive mind to admit full passage to the Creative flow of Light, Love and Wisdom and 'see the miracle of man becoming god.' In this way one joins the Creative process; participation in it is one's true role. Looked at it from another angle, we call this new consciousness of man as free and creative. The mystic's performance is not merely repetitive or mechanistic. He is spontaneously moral, for his activity is

inexplicable by any theory of ethics. In the state of blissful equanimity, a chain of Sikh Gurus defied death, culminating in the unparalleled sacrifices of the Tenth Guru. Such a conduct is unknown to the behavioural psyche of the phenomenal world. One has to assume a moral world of the neumenon (*Naam*) in order to comprehend the spontaneity and the categories of such a normal life.

In the Gurus' system, mystic achievement is primarily the development of a higher centre of propulsion or creative consciousness. It is not the realisation of the idea, nor the understanding of a concept. Nor is it the continuous absorption in a state of bliss. It is an altruistic life; the only true and mature existence. It is wholly and solely a deed, an activity. For, God is Attributive, the 'Protector of the weak' and 'the Destroyer of the evil.' He 'showers His blessings where the weak are helped.' It is in this light that the mystic and the devotee of God have to be all activity. For a moral deed alone involves the exercise of freedom and choice. The mystic knows His Will and carries it out. He is imbued with the Creative and Attributive Will of God. He is the medium of its expression. The ideal is to establish the kingdom of God on earth and make everyone God-conscious. This ideal is central to the mystic system of the Gurus. For, 'God created the earth in order to evolve the superman' to do His Creative Will. The Guru is the epitome of God's creation and has the principal role to play. He is not a show-piece of God; but he is the instrument of His Will. It is a declaration of great significance and hope for man.

The mystic is not a complacent or a quiet spectator of events, accepting them as they happen. His task is to lead men to their destiny. He lives a life of truth and love. For that is the only way he can understand their meaning and reality. His method of teaching is to give a lead and set the example. Love is the medium of his expression; and love is both dynamic and creative. Service of man and not merger is his goal of life. Man and the mystic have a common and a complimentary role to play. As a centre of higher consciousness, the mystic sets the pace and the direction of work.

The universe is God's handiwork. But God never takes the human form. Man can never be God. He is the Creator, we are His creation. Prayer and the mystic experience are the two modes of communion with Him. Prayer is the essential part of the Sikh discipline. And prayer has no meaning where the relation is of identity and not of "You" and "I". Prayer is not a realisation of one's being Brahman. On the contrary, it is a recognition of one's being

insignificantly small compared to Him. The concept of prayer is entirely opposed to that of "I am Brahman" (*Aham Brahm Asmi*). The mystic souls do not die. They are filled with God, ever ready and anxious to fulfil His commands.

It is in this context that the mystic understands his role and looks upon the world and life as the meaningful creation of God. He has a message for man and a mission to carry out. What has been the mission of the Gurus, becomes the mission of every Sikh mystic. That is the result and test of his new awakening and union with God. God-consciousness transforms him into a new being with the innate nature, like God, of helping every failing and faltering person and of fighting the oppressor. Under all eventualities the mystic is in bliss and poise. In existential terms he is wholly free and creative; but he does not feel insecure. For, he is no longer alienated from God, the Fountain of all Freedom and Creativity. It is for these reasons that while the Gurus have strongly objected to the mystics being called God, they have likened them to God in whose Creative Activity they participate. For, God works not through miracles, but through the mystics. The mystic too does no miracles, except the miracle of truly altruistic deeds.

The Gurus' thesis is that while everyone must participate in the constructive and moral development of life, and everyone has a contribution to make, the mystic's responsibility, as the executor of God's Will, is the greatest. Wherever there are great problems to solve and challenges to meet, the mystic reacts in order to tackle them. He makes no distinction between the religious and the secular life. The mystic's mission is to be in the mainstream of life. For, he has to play the pioneer's role. "Mohammad of Arabia ascended the highest Heaven and returned." In the Gurus' system, the mystic returns and works. His return to work is the surest sign and test of his being a prophetic mystic. For the Gurus the mystic existence is living God in life. That alone is true living. For, He is the Life of all life.

Accordingly, a mysticism of Rest, Knowledge, Isolation, Salvation or Merger has, by the very nature of their thesis, no place in the Gurus' religious system. In Sikhism a continuous participation in the Ever-creative Life of God is the goal. It is a goal that knows of no ending or rest. It is a life of perpetual living in and for God. This is the prophetic mysticism of the Gurus, called Sikhism.

Comparison : We have already outlined the religious back-

ground and the *milieu* against which Guru Nanak started his mission. Nor can we ignore a significant criterion revealed by the history of mysticism : Quietist mysticism follows Prophetic mysticism; it does not give rise to it.

We have described the chief tenets and trends of Indian mysticism and those of Guru Nanak's religion. On almost every essential issue Guru Nanak's answers to the mystic and the human problems are generally contrary to those given by the earlier systems. The then existing religious movements had been running in a direction exactly opposite to the one in which Guru Nanak wanted his religious stream to flow. The system of the Gurus and the Indian religions lay down contrasted goals for man. In the old Indian systems any involvement in the world is a distraction; it impedes and stops the spiritual progress. A *Jnani* wanting to reach the ultimate or even the penultimate stage has to give up all kinds of activity. For, even moral activity does not behove a true or higher type of *Jnani*, it being of only a relative nature. The first-stage *Jnanis* have yet to grow by giving up the domain of multiplicity and realtive functioning. For the highest-level *Jnani* the world is a mirage. He is Brahman. It would not quite appropriate to call him even a 'he', as that would imply that he lives in the realm of relativity. At the final stage he and Brahman are one.

As against it, in Guru Nanak's religion creative and moral activities are an essential and integral part of the mystic's role in life. By their martyrdoms and sacrifices, the Guru have made this aspect of their system very explicit. Our object is to compare and contrast the two systems, not to assess them. The two classes of religions are entirely different in their approach and aims, their ideas and ideals and their modes and methods of worship and working. In the traditional mystic systems the goal is either 'to make room for holy' by the 'emptying of consciousness', or to reach the state of 'gnostic knowledge', through the 'internally isolating techniques' of 'concentrated meditation.'[52] But, in the Gurus' system the Immanent (*Naam*) is the Ever-fresh Fount gushing forth into the universe. The human goal is to establish an intuitional or mystic link with this Never-ebbing Spring in order to be the humble but conscious vehicle of God's Creative Flow of Love. The mystic's role is dynamic. The aim is not to merge in the Self-absorbed Void.

In the one group of systems, one rises towards the heavens to join the Transcendent. In Sikhism one tries to bring the Transcendent to the earth. For, the Gurus emphasise that the

Transcendent is Immanent too, deeply interested in His creation. It is in this perspective that we have to view and understand the message of Guru Nanak.

After the call came to him, Guru Nanak announced his mission for establishing equality between man and man. He wanted to create a society that drew its inspiration and strength from God, but worked on the earth. The Radical Bhakti mystics, we find, had already done a part of the demolition work that Guru Nanak had necessarily to do in order to build his new structure. The scriptures that had given sanction to the old religious systems and the caste structure were criticised and disowned by these Bhaktas. But, Guru Nanak did much more. He and his successors emphatically reiterated their complete rejection of the earlier religions and social systems and the principles underlying them. It was he who laid the clear foundations of a new religion and a society that tended to obliterate all distinctions between man and man and between the secular and the spiritual. Neither asceticism nor monasticism, but being a householder or a working person, with obligation to share one's earnings with others, became the essential condition for joining the Sikh organisation. The Gurus' discipline insisted not on *Mantras* and mechanical meditation, but chiefly on moral living and the service of man. The object was to raise the socio-spiritual stature of man and not to seek and secure any personal salvation. The Gurus were concerned with all fields of man's life. They worked among the lowliest of them and led them.

The Radical Bhakti saints had, to an extent, weaned away the people from the ritualism and formalism of the earlier systems. But being Quietists themselves, they never thought of a change in the direction of the spiritual stream as vital to their mysticism. Because of their mystic experience and the logic of their religious system, the Gurus took up the colossal task of completely reversing the direction of the religious life and of diverting all spiritual energies for the enrichment of human affairs.

In pursuance of their plan, they organised a new society. They gave it a new scripture and new symbols. They conditioned man into fresh codes of conduct and discipline. They created new institutions and laid down new ideals and goals. Their mysticism had an inalienable social content and implications. The Gurus identified the socio-political problems of their time. They and the Sikh society calculatedly and continuously reacted against and attacked the social and political evils and the immoral institutions

based on them.

The contrast between the Indian religious systems represented by the *Upanisads* and Sikhism is so great that there is harldy a common fundamental between the two. The Sikh mystic draws all his energies and inspiration from God and carries out his Will in the world. Unlike the other group, he neither renounces the world nor seeks to revert to Brahman. In fact, the very concept of "I am Brahman" appears heretical and egoistic to him. But, to the Quietist all work in the world is of a relative nature and represents a lower stage of mystic development. It is not a contrast that is merely incidental or the result of environmental forces. For, we find that the same contrast in approach and direction is visible between the views of modern Hindu mystics and those of the Sikh mystics like Baba Wasakha Singh. Unless we accept the logical assumption that this contrast is due to the differences in the basic mystic experiences themselves, it is impossible to explain these diametric divergencies between the mystic faith and functioning of the two systems, the Quietists and the Activists.

A broad survey of the world religions reveals that the essential elements of the Gurus' system were nowhere to be found in the contemporary religious life and scene. Much less was there any visible trace of them in the Indian background. In comprised systems that were quite opposed in their outlook, approach and religious thesis. The entire history of the world shows only a few prophetic mystics. Before the Sikh Gurus, the Prophet of Islam was the only man of God who welded the spiritual and the temporal into the most balanced blend of a life of love. It is such a singular feat of prophetic mysticism that those who believe in the dichotomy between the religious and the secular lives find it difficult to understand this marvel.

That is exactly the reason that persons suffering from academic astigmatism cannot view as a harmonious whole, the miraculous panorama of integrated life lived and created by the Sikh Gurus. Persons conditioned to different world-views, or those dividing the house of God from that of Caesar's, will always fail to understand a prophetic mystic. They will interpret him incoherently. That is why there are authors who feel that the sixth and the tenth Gurus sharply deviated from the path of divine peace and love laid by Guru Nanak. A few academicians state that it was under the pressure of persecution and circumstances that Guru Gobind Singh resorted to arms and created the *Khalsa* as a necessary expedient. For the pacifists, the use of the sword, even

for a righteous cause, is self-defeating, since no just order, they feel, can be built by the force of arms. Those who believe in a religion of personal salvation, find it difficult to reconcile Guru Nanak's attack on formalism with the subsequent Gurus' deliberate attempt at creating new institutions, culminating in the creation of the *Khalsa* by Guru Gobind Singh. Some writers regard the apparently peaceful preachings by the first five Gurus as incongruous with the military preparations of the subsequent Gurus. Trump calls Sikhism a religion of muttering the praise and name of God, coupled with the devotional singing of Gurus' hymns, but without any sound, ethical content. Stray suggestions have also been made that it is purely the historical and environmental factors that have determined the course of Sikhism; the Gurus prescribed only a religion of salvation without any social content. For some authors Sikhism is a reform movement within Hinduism, no more radical than the theism of Kabir and Namdev. For still others, there is hardly a noticeable gap between the so called *Sant* tradition of northern India and the Sikh Gurus, the former being a growth resulting either from the interiority of Nathism or the impact of Sufism. For some traditionalists, there is a single line of theism starting with the synthesised Bhagavatism of the *Bhagavad Gita* coming down to all the devotional theistic schools of the present day.

Our examination reveals that all such views have to be rejected as superficial and inherently untenable. May be, it is beyond the ken of these wise men to understand that the *elan* of love and life that flows in the veins of a prophetic mystic gives rise, at the same time, to the blood of martyrs, to the steel of the sword of the soldiers, to the deep devotion of the saint, to the service of the suffering and to the divine embrace that, without distinction of class and creed, soothes, heals and redeems all men within a single fold. Every Sikh prayer ends with the words, "May God bless the entire humanity." This is the Prophetic mysticism of the Gurus, the religion of the God's Will, leading to an integrated life of creative love and freedom.

We are at the close of our discussion. We have been able to identify four world-views that are commonly prevalent. The first of them we have not discussed. It is the materialist-rationalist world-view. This materialism may be of any variety, but essentially it is a mechanistic world-view; for it assumes nothing beyond the validity of matter and an egoist individual consciousness. Even if the emphasis is on reason, it remains primarily a pliable tool of

the egoist psyche. Obviously, this view does not recognize anything beyond the observations of science and astronomy. Ultimately, it leads to dismal pessimism. Dark death is the fate of our planet, the world being without purpose and hope. It makes not the least difference even if an element of faith is grafted on it in the form of Hegelian dialectics. For, essentially this view rests on the functioning of an egoist psyche. Hegel called the author of involved and ambiguous verbiage,[53] devised his Idealism in order to camouflage and justifiy the rise of Prussian despotism. This "philosophy made itself the champion of injustice, cruelty and opposition to progress."[54] When Marx embraced this Hegelian dialectics and arranged an inter-class marriage of convenience between this idealistic tenet and his materialism, the objective was no different. He also wanted this principle to serve as the basis of a new despotism intended to govern the world, masking it under the grandiloquent name of Proletariat Rule. As was the basic objective in each case, this world-view could evolve nothing beyond a national despotic state with a bigoted belief in its destiny to rule the world. It is the fundamental failing of our egoist psyche that, in the absence of any internal or external ethical brakes to curb its aggressive animal Propensities, it develops a fanatical faith in its self-righteousness. This enables the dictator or the oligarchy to exterminate callously millions of one's countrymen, including one's life-long companions and votaries of a common ideology. Here the advice is not to love your neighbours as yourself, but to incite mén or hang their neighbours by the nearest tree and then gloat over it with a 'guffaw'.[55] Another unfortunate feature of such a materialism or a Hegelian idealism is the absence of idea of a soul. The emphasis is not on the rights of individuals, as there are none, but on those of the class. Like the cell in a colony of volvox, the individual is only an instrument in the life of the class. Just as under the caste system, here too there are no loyalty and duty towards the individual; the interests of the class or caste alone are paramount. Ultimately, even the class interests come to merge in the interests of the dictator or the oligarchy. Similarly, with the Hegelian idealism, the relevent thing is the dialectical movement towards the Absolute Idea and not the individual who could justifiably be subdued into submission in order to serve the interests of the state.[56] The goal is the achievement of power for the state, society, caste, class or the Absolute Idea, and not the improvement of the quality of the individual who remains a mere tool.

The second world-view is Vedantic, absolutic, monistic, idealistic or pantheistic. According to it, the ideal is reversionary movement to the original state. The world is either an illusion or a place of suffering. The individual, being not a meaningful entity, has hardly a moral responsibility.

The third world-view is represented by the semi-active mystics. Here the world is real. The individual has a meaning and a soul. Moral life has a validity. But, social involvement and responsibility are distinctly avoided as a distraction, the ideal being only a blissful union with God.

The fourth world-view is that of the prophetic mystics. The world is real and a meaningful creation. The ideal is to develop a higher human consciousness with a view to a truly altruistic social existence and the enrichment of life and the world. The individual has a soul. The object is to raise the level of the individual. The world has been created in order to evolve the superman. Man becomes the measure of progress. He is the end and not the means. The medium of perfection is through humility and love. It is an ideal of hope, of a meaningful life and of a purposeful goal. It is not a Utopian dream, but an ideal that the prophets have actually lived. It is true that in the name of religion great crimes have been committed, cruelties practised and large scale tyranny and butchery perpetrated. Evidently, rapacity does not cease to be evil if practised under the banner of Religion, Church, State, Patriotism or Class-struggle. Because of the faults and failings of the egoistic psyche so often men stoop to such degradations. But, the path of rise to a higher consciousness is the only way out, though long and arduous. Here, when the call comes, a Guru Arjun or a Guru Tegh Bahadur spontaneously seeks martyrdom. Here a Sarmad without the least malice towards his executioner smiles at him. For, he sees in him the Face of God. Here a Christ and Hallaj pray to forgive the ignorance of their executioners and tormentors. They do not tend to liquidate them. This is the world-view of Sikhism.

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37. Dasgupta, op. cit; pp. 132-133.
38. Hiriyanna, op. cit; pp. 50-51; Zimmer, op. cit; pp. 443-445, 448-451; Keith, pp. 586-587; Max Weber, op. cit; p. 186.

Chapter 7
Saivism

1. This chapter is based on the exposition of Saivism by R.G. Bhandarkar in his book : *Vaisnavism and Saivism*. The part of the chapter on Southern Saivism is based on M. Dhavamony's book, *Love of God According to Saiva Siddhanta*.
2. Dhavamony, pp. 117-120, 176, 186.
3. *ibid*, pp. 120, 130.
4. *ibid*, pp. 134-135, 355.

5. *ibid*, p. 117.
6. *ibid*, pp. 182, 235-236, 220-222, 269-273, 320.
7. *ibid*, pp. 127, 135, 140-141.
8. *ibid*, pp. 177, 189.
9. *ibid*, p. 188.
10. *ibid*, pp. 182, 196-199, 216, 223, 239-240, 250-251, 272, 320, 364-367.
11. *ibid*, pp. 298, 357.
12. *ibid*, pp. 216, 259, 326.

Chapter 8

Buddhism

1. The parts dealing with Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism follow the exposition of these by A.K. Coomaraswamy in his book, *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*. The part dealing with Zen Buddhism follows its exposition by A.W. Watts in his book, *The Way of Zen*. Other authorities used are referred to.
2. Spencer, op. cit; p. 78.
3. *ibid*, p. 72.
4. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; p. 88.
5. Spencer, op. cit; p. 70.
6. *ibid*, pp. 72-73.
7. *ibid*, p. 73.
8. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 117-118, 120, 151; Zimmer, op. cit; pp. 477-478.
9. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; p. 120.
10. *ibid*, pp. 117-122, 144, 154-155, 167, 177, 209; Zimmer, op. cit; p. 508.
11. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 121-122, 146.
12. *ibid*, p. 128.
13. *ibid*, p. 151.
14. *ibid*, pp. 112-114.
15. *ibid*, pp. 108-109.
16. *ibid*, p. 111.
17. *ibid*, pp. 112-115.
18. Spencer, op. cit; p. 77.
19. *ibid*, p. 79.
20. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 115-116.
21. *ibid*, pp. 117-119.
22. Spencer, op. cit; p. 75.
23. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 145-146, 153-155.
24. *ibid*, pp. 83, 117-121, 154, 167-168, 177, 209; Zimmer, op. cit; p. 508.
25. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; p. 171.
26. *ibid*, pp. 172-173.
27. *ibid*, p. 174.
28. *ibid*, pp. 117-119.
29. *ibid*, pp. 177, 209-210, 223.
30. *ibid*, pp. 210-212.
31. *ibid*, p. 214.
32. Spencer, op. cit; p. 68.
33. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 213, 223, 228; Zimmer, op. cit; pp. 484-485.
34. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 224-225.
35. *ibid*, p. 225.
36. Spencer, op. cit; p. 81.
37. *ibid*, pp. 81-82.
38. Suzuki, D.T. : *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, pp. 96-97.
39. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; pp. 245-246.
40. Spencer, op. cit; pp. 82-84.
41. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; p. 253.
42. *ibid*, pp. 245-246; Spencer, op. cit; pp. 82-84.
43. Suzuki, *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, p. 69.

44. *ibid*, p. 47.
45. Suzuki and others : *Zen Buddhism and Psychology*, pp. 16-17.
46. *ibid*, pp. 19-20.
47. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; p. 239.
48. Spencer, op. cit; pp. 84-87.
49. *ibid*, pp. 85-86.
50. *ibid*, pp. 85-89.
51. Coomaraswamy, op. cit; p. 66.
52. *ibid*, pp. 232-234.
53. *ibid*, pp. 236-237.
54. *ibid*, pp. 231-233.
55. *ibid*, pp. 232-234.
56. *ibid*, p. 248.
57. *ibid*, p. 252.
58. *ibid*, pp. 245-247.
59. *ibid*, pp. 240-246.
60. *ibid*, p. 245; Suzuki, Zen, op. cit; pp. 70-71.
61. Watts, op. cit; p. 84.
62. *ibid*, p. 86.
63. *ibid*, p. 90.
64. *ibid*, pp. 90-91.
65. *ibid*, pp. 95-96.
66. *ibid*, p. 101.
67. Suzuki, *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, p. 71.
68. Watts, op. cit; p. 106.
69. *ibid*, p. 108.
70. *ibid*, pp. 119-121.
71. *ibid*, pp. 124, 127.
72. *ibid*, p. 177.
73. *ibid*, pp. 135-136.
74. *ibid*, p. 147.
75. *ibid*, p. 155.
76. *ibid*, p. 160.
77. *ibid*, pp. 167-168.
78. *ibid*, p. 172.
79. *ibid*, pp. 184-185, 192.
80. Suzuki, *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, p. 38.
81. *ibid*, p. 9.
82. *ibid*, p. 14.
83. *ibid*, p. 80.
84. *ibid*, pp. 111-112.
85. *ibid*, pp. 79, 90.
86. *ibid*, p. 76.
87. *ibid*, p. 79.
88. Suzuki and Others : *Zen Buddhism*, p. 37.
89. Suzuki, *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, pp. 96-97.
90. *ibid*, p. 43.
91. *ibid*, p. 44.
92. *ibid*, pp. 67-68.
93. Suzuki, *Zen* Buddhism, p. 58.
94. *ibid*, p. 71.
95. *ibid*, pp. 74-75.
96. *ibid*, p. 71.
97. *ibid*, pp. 72-74.
98. Watts, op. cit; pp. 119, 220.
99. Suzuki, *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, pp. 109, 110, 112.
100. *ibid*, p. 106.
101. *ibid*, p. 107.
102. *ibid*, p. 74.
103. Watts, p. 220.
104. Suzuki, *Mysticism : Christian and Buddhist*, p. 65; Zaehner, op. cit; p. 5.
105. Zaehner, op. cit; p. 111.

Chapter 9

Christianity and Christian Mystics

1. The description about Christian Mysticism flows from the exposition of the subject by Sydney Spencer in his book, *Mysticism in World Religion*, chapter 7. In addition, other sources used are indicated.
2. Spencer, op. cit; p. 213.
3. *ibid*, p. 215.
4. *Bible*-John, p.15; Mathew, p.5.

5. Spencer, op. cit; p. 221.
6. *ibid*, pp. 239-240.
7. *ibid*, pp. 243-245.
8. Inge, W.R. : *Mysticism in Religion*, p. 161.
9. Spencer, op. cit; p. 244.
10. *ibid.*
11. *ibid*, p. 243.
12. *ibid*, p. 245.
13. *ibid*, p. 245.
14. *ibid*, p. 247.
15. *ibid*, p. 250.
16. *ibid.*
17. *ibid*, p. 251.
18. *ibid*, pp. 243-256.
19. *ibid*, pp. 269-270.
20. *ibid*, pp. 272-273.
21. Underhill Evelyn : *Mysticism*, pp. 409-410.
22. *ibid*, p. 277.
23. *ibid*, p. 278.
24. *ibid*, p. 280.
25. *ibid*, p. 282.
26. *ibid*, p. 284.
27. *ibid*, p. 290.

Chapter 10

Islam and Sufism

1. Iqbal, M. : *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 62.
2. *ibid*, pp. 63, 93, 135.
3. *ibid*, p. 65; Amir Ali : *The Spirit of Islam*,· p. 32.
4. Iqbal, op. cit; p. 105.
5. *ibid*, pp. 10, 15, 83.
6. *ibid*, pp. 20-22, 26-27.
7. *ibid*, pp. 12, 95.
8. *ibid*, p. 110.
9. *ibid*, p. 140.
10. *ibid*, pp. 12, 106, 110.
11. Arberry, A.J. : *Sufism*, p. 32.
12. Iqbal, op. cit; p. 154.
13. *ibid*, p. 147.
14. *ibid*, p. 155.
15. *ibid*, p. 166.
16. *ibid*, p. 110.
17. *ibid*, pp. 124, 197-198.
18. *ibid*, p. 193.
19. This part of the chapter follows the exposition of Sufism by A.J. Arberry. In addition, other sources used are indicated.
20. Zaehner, op. cit; p. 66.
21. Arberry, op. cit; p. 26.
22. *ibid*, p. 28.
23. *ibid*, pp. 37-38.
24. *ibid*, p. 42.
25. Spencer, op. cit; p. 305.
26. Arberry, op. cit; p. 44.
27. Spencer, op. cit; p. 302.
28. *ibid*, p. 305.
29. *ibid*, p. 315.
30. Zaehner, op. cit; p. 163.
31. Arberry, op. cit; pp. 54-55.
32. *ibid*, pp. 58-59.
33. *ibid*, pp. 59-60.
34. *ibid*, pp. 59-60.
35. Zaehner, op. cit; pp. 92, 115.
36. Arberry, op. cit; p. 63.
37. *ibid*, pp. 64-65.
38. *ibid*, pp. 94-96; Spencer, op. cit; pp. 312-314.
39. Arberry, op. cit; pp. 102-104.
40. *ibid*, pp. 104-105.
41. *ibid*, pp. 108-109.
42. *ibid*, p. 110.
43. *ibid*, p. 117.
44. Spencer, op. cit; pp. 319, 322, 323.
45. *ibid*, pp. 321-322.
46. *ibid*, pp. 322-323.
47. *ibid*, p. 325.
48. *ibid*, p. 306.
49. *ibid*, p. 307.
50. *ibid*, p. 308.

51. Zaehner, op. cit; p. 156.
52. Spencer, op. cit; p. 309.
53. *ibid*, p. 317.
54. Bhandarkar, op. cit; p. 123.
55. Arberry, op. cit; pp. 72-73.
56. *ibid*, p. 78.
57. Spencer, op. cit; p. 324.

Chapter 11

The Radical Bhakti School

1. Tara Chand : *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 147.
2. Bhandarkar, op. cit; p. 69.
3. Tara Chand, op. cit; p. 148.
4. *ibid*, p. 154.
5. *ibid*, pp. 145, 150.
6. *ibid*, pp. 150-152.
7. Macauliffe, M.A. *Sikh Religion*, Vol. vi, pp. 131, 143-144, 153-154, 172, 171, 224-225, 229, 245.
8. Tara Chand, op. cit; pp. 151, 163.
9. *ibid*, p. 154.
10. *ibid*, p. 155.
11. *ibid*, p. 150; Macauliffe, vi, op.cit; p. 160.
12. *ibid*, pp. 155-156.
13. *ibid*, p. 158.
14. *ibid*, pp. 161-162.
15. Bhandarkar, op. cit; p. 71.
16. Tara Chand, op. cit; p. 160.
17. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; p. 141.
18. Tara Chand, op. cit; pp. 159-160.
19. Bhandarkar, op. cit; p. 73.
20. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; p. 199.
21. *ibid*, p. 204.
22. Bhandarkar, op. cit; p. 91.
23. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; pp. 41, 49.
24. Prabhakar Machwe : *Namdev*, p. 61.
25. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; p. 24.
26. *ibid*, p. 27.
27. Machwe, op. cit; pp. 59-60.
28. *ibid*, pp. 74-75.
29. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; p. 48.
30. *ibid*, p. 75.
31. *ibid*, p. 70.
32. *ibid*, p. 43.
33. *ibid*, p. 61.
34. *ibid*, p. 75.
35. *ibid*,
36. *ibid*, p. 60.
37. *ibid*, p. 46.
38. Bhandarkar, op. cit; p. 93.
39. *ibid*, p. 95.
40. *ibid*, pp. 96-97.
41. *ibid*, p. 97.
42. *ibid*, p. 98.
43. *ibid*,
44. *ibid*, pp. 98-99.
45. Tara Chand, op. cit; pp. 179-180.
46. Tara Chand, p. 180.
47. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; p. 317.
48. Macauliffe, vi, op. cit; p. 328.
49. *ibid*, pp. 328, 329.
50. *ibid*, p. 336.
51. *ibid*, p. 337.
52. Ray, Niharranjan : *The Sikh Gurus and The Sikh Society*, p. 25.
53. *ibid*, pp. 25-26.
54. *ibid*, p. 61.
55. *ibid*,
56. *ibid*, p. 62.
57. *ibid*, p. 61.
58. *ibid*, p. 67.
59. *ibid*, p. 68.
60. *ibid*, pp. 68, 70-71.
61. *ibid*, p. 71.
62. *ibid*, pp. 74. 77-78.
63. *ibid*, pp. 87-88.
64. *ibid*, pp. 86, 88, 90, 91, 96, 97.
65. Gupta, H.R. : *History of the Sikh Gurus*, pp. 72-73.

Chapter 12

Modern Hindu Mysticism

1. Sri Aurbindo Ghosha : *The Life Divine*, p. 28.
2. Ray, D.K. : *Among the Great*, p. 201.
3. *ibid*, p. 329.
4. This view is based on the book, *Spiritual Experiences* by Swami Sivananda.
5. *ibid*, pp. 214-215.
6. *ibid*, p. 213.
7. *ibid*, p. 216.
8. *ibid*,
9. *ibid*, pp. 216-217.
10. *ibid*, pp. 222-223.
11. *ibid*, p. 220.
12. *ibid*, p. 225.
13. *ibid*, p. 227.
14. *ibid*, p. 228.
15. *ibid*, pp. 231-232.
16. *ibid*, p. 232.
17. *ibid*, pp. 233, 236, 237.
18. *ibid*, p. 239.
19. *ibid*, pp. 242-243.
20. *Chandogya Upanisad*, VIII, 12, 3. (Sivananda, op. cit; p. 244).
21. Sivananda, op. cit; p. 224.
22. *ibid*, p. 246.
23. *ibid*, p. 247.

Chapter 13

The Idea of God

1. ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ (1)*
2. ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀਅ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਲਿਖਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ॥ (463)
3. ਸਸੈ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਹਜਿ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਨ ਇਕ ਜੋਤੀ ॥ (930)
   ਆਪੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ ਆਪੀਨੈ ਰਚਿਓ ਨਾਉ ॥
   ਦੁਯੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸਾਜੀਐ ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ ॥ (463)
4. ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਇਅਨੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਅਲਗੁ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥ (937)
5. ਤੂ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
   ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ (11-12)
6. ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੁੰਧੂਕਾਰਾ ॥ ਧਰਣਿ ਨ ਗਗਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥
   ... ...
   ਭਾਉ ਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਨਾ ਸਿਵ ਸਕਤੀ ॥ (1035-46)
7. ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਹੋਤੋ ਰੇਖ ਨ ਕਾਈ ਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਕਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈ ॥
   ... ...
   ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਪਸਿ ਸਾਚਾ ॥
   ... ...
   ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਰੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਤੀ ਤਉ ਅਕੁਲੀਣਿ ਰਹਤਉ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁ ਸਾਰੁ ॥
   ਗਉਨੁ ਗਗਨ ਜਬ ਤਬਹਿ ਨ ਹੋਤਉ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਜੋਤਿ ਆਪੇ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ॥
   ਵਰਨੁ ਭੇਖੁ ਅਸਰੂਪੁ ਸੁ ਏਕੋ ਏਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਿਡਾਣੀ ॥
   ਸਾਚ ਬਿਨਾ ਸੂਚਾ ਕੋ ਨਾਹੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥ (945-46)
8. ਸਚ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥.......

* The figures given within brackets against the hymns in Chapters xiii to xxiv indicate pages in the standard edition of Guru Granth Sahib.

ਜਿਵ ਜਿਵ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ ॥ ਵੇਖੈ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਕਰਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ (8)

9. ਆਦਿ ਕਉ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਕਥੀਅਲੇ ਸੁੰਨ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਵਾਸੁ ਲੀਆ ॥ (940)

10. ਜਬ ਆਕਾਰੁ ਇਹੁ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟੇਤਾ ॥ ਪਾਪ ਪੁੰਨ ਤਬ ਕਹਤੇ ਹੋਤਾ ॥
ਜਬ ਧਾਰੀ ਆਪਨ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ॥ ਤਬ ਬੈਰ ਬਿਰੋਧ ਕਿਸੁ ਸੰਗਿ ਕਮਾਤਿ ॥
ਜਬ ਆਪਨ ਆਪ ਆਪਿ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ॥ ਤਬ ਮੋਹ ਕਹਾ ਕਿਸੁ ਹੋਵਤ ਭਰਮ ॥ (290)

11. ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੁੰਧੂਕਾਰਾ.....॥
ਨਾ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਨ ਚੰਦੁ ਨ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਲਗਾਇਦਾ ॥ (1035-36)

12. ਹਰਿ ਬਿਅੰਤੁ ਹਉ ਮਿਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਵਰਨਉ ਕਿਆ ਜਾਨਾ ਹੋਇ ਕੈਸੋ ਰੇ ॥ (612)

13. ਆਪਿ ਖੜੋਵਹਿ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਿ ਆਪੀਣੈ ਆਪਾਹੁ ॥ (788)

14. ਸਭ ਕੈ ਮਧਿ ਅਲਿਪਤੋ ਰਹੈ ॥ (294)

15. ਕਾਇਆ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਵਸਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਆਪੇ ਰਸ ਭੋਗੀ ॥
ਆਪਿ ਅਤੀਤੁ ਅਲਿਪਤੁ ਹੈ ਨਿਰਜੋਗੁ ਹਰਿ ਜੋਗੀ ॥ (514)

16. ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੁਕਤਾ ॥ (939)

17. ਉਪ੍ਰੋਕਤ ਨੋਟ 4.

18. ਉਪ੍ਰੋਕਤ ਨੋਟ 7.

19. ਸਰਗੁਨ ਨਿਰਗੁਨ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧੀ ਆਪਿ ॥ (290)

20. ਸਰਗੁਣ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਥਾਪੈ ਨਾਉ ॥ (387)

21. ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਆਕਾਰ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰਗੁਨ ਸਰਗੁਨ ਏਕ ॥ (250)

22. ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਸਭ ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ॥ (916)

22a ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰਿ ਸੰਤ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ।

22b ਅਸੁਰ ਸੰਘਾਰਣ ਰਾਮ ਹਮਾਰਾ ।

23. ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਨੀਤ ਨਵਾ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਦਾਤਾਰੁ ॥ (660)

24. ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੰਧਪੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਭ੍ਰਾਤਾ ॥
ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸਭਨੀ ਥਾਈ ਤਾ ਭਉ ਕੇਹਾ ਕਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ (103)

25. ਦੀਨ ਦਰਦ ਦੁਖ ਭੰਜਨਾ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਨਾਥ ਅਨਾਥ ॥ (263-64)

26. ਅੰਧੁਲੇ ਟਿਕ ਨਿਰਧਨ ਧਨੁ ਪਾਇਓ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਨਿਕ ਗੁਨੀ ॥ (830)

27. ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਬਿਸਰੈ ਜਿ ਘਾਲ ਨ ਭਾਨੈ ॥ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਬਿਸਰੈ ਜਿ ਕੀਆ ਜਾਨੈ ॥
....
ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਬਿਸਰੈ ਜਿ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਆ ॥ (289-290)

28. ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਆਸ ਕਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਕੁਝੁ ਤਾਰੇ ਤੇਰਾ ਕੁਟੰਬ ਸਭੁ ਛਡਾਈ ॥ (859)

29. Bhai Gurdas, Kabit Swaiyas.

30. ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

31. ਸਗਲ ਪਰਾਧ ਦੇਹਿ ਲੋਰੋਨੀ ॥ ਸੋ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਜੋਨੀ ॥ (1136)

32. ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੇ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥ (473)

33. ਤੂ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਜੋਨਿ ਨ ਆਵਹੀ ॥ (1095)

34. ਜਾਤਿ ਅਜਾਤਿ ਅਜੋਨੀ ਸੰਭਉ ਨ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਉ ਨ ਭਰਮਾ ॥ (597)

35. ਕੋਟਿ ਬਿਸਨ ਕੀਏ ਅਵਤਾਰ ॥ ਕੋਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਜਾਕੇ ਧ੍ਰਮਸਾਲ ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਮਹੇਸ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਮਾਏ ॥ ਕੋਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਜਗ ਸਾਜਣ ਲਾਏ ॥ (1156)
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਹੋਰਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਰਾਮ ਰਵਾਲ ॥
ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕੰਨ੍ਹ ਕਹਾਣੀਆ ਕੇਤੇ ਬੇਦ ਬੀਚਾਰ ॥ (464)

36. ਨਾਨਕ ਮਤੀ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਕਰਮੁ ਸਚਾ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥ (467)

37. ਸੋ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਅਗਮਾ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥ (10)
38. Sharma I. C.: *The Ethics of Buddhism, Ethical Philosophies of India*, p. 169.
39. ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਸਗਲੇ ਜੰਤ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਖੰਡ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਸੁਨਨ ਗਿਆਨ ਧਿਆਨ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਆਗਾਸ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਆਕਾਰ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਸਭ ਭਵਨ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਉਧਰੇ ਸੁਨਿ ਸ੍ਰਵਨ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਆਪਨੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਚਉਥੇ ਪਦ ਮਹਿ ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਏ ॥ (284)
40. ਨਾਮੇ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਉਪਜੇ ਭਾਈ ਨਾਇ ਵਿਸਰਿਐ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਇ ॥ (603)
41. ਨਾਮੇ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੋਆ.... ॥ (753)
42. ਨਾਮੇ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਮੇ ਸੋਝੀ ਪਾਈ ॥ (946)
43. ਜੇਤਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਤਾ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋ ਥਾਉ ॥ (4)
44. ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਦੇਹੀ ਮਹਿ ਇਸ ਕਾ ਬਿਸ੍ਰਾਮੁ ॥ (293)
45. ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਅਲਖੁ ਹੈ ਕਿਉ ਲਖਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਨਾਲਿ ਹੈ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਈਐ ਭਾਈ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਰਵਿਆ ਸਭ ਠਾਈ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੇ ਤੇ ਪਾਈਐ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਦੇਇ ਦਿਖਾਈ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮੁ ਹੋਇ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਭਾਈ ॥ (1242)
46 ਸਾਹਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ॥ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ॥ (350)

Chapter 14

The Metaphysical View

1. ਆਪੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ ਆਪੀਨੈ ਰਚਿਓ ਨਾਉ ॥
ਦੁਯੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸਾਜੀਐ ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ ॥ (463)
2. ਸਿਖ ਰਹਿਤ ਮ੍ਰਯਾਦਾ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ । (ਪੰਨਾ 35)
3. ਜੇਤੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰੀ ਜਗਦੀਸਰਿ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਊਚ ਹਮ ਨੀਚ ਬਿਖਿਆਸ ॥ (1295)
4. ਮੈ ਓਹੀ ਰੇ, ਮੈ ਓਹੀ ਰੇ ॥ (ਗੁਰਮਤ ਨਿਰਣਯ, ਡਾਕਟਰ ਜੋਧ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪੰਨਾ 69)
5. ਜੋ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਉਚਰਿ ਹੈ ॥ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਨਰਕਿ ਕੁੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਪਰ ਹੈ ॥
ਮੈ ਹੋ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੋ ਦਾਸਾ ॥ (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)
6. ਇਕਥੈ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੈ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਭ੍ਰਮੁ ਭਉ ਜਾਈ ਹੈ ॥ (1047-48)
7. ਸਭ ਕੈ ਮਧਿ ਸਭ ਹੂ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਰਾਗ ਦੋਖ ਤੇ ਨਿਆਰੋ ॥ (784)
ਸਭ ਕੈ ਮਧਿ ਅਲਿਪਤੋ ਰਹੈ ॥ (294)
8. ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ ॥ (62)
9. ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਚੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ ॥ (8)
10. Iqbal, Mohammad, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p.61.

Chapter 15

The World

1. ਸਸੈ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਹਜਿ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਨ ਇਕ ਜੋਤੀ ॥ (930)
2. ਸਚੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਖੰਡ ਸਚੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ॥

ਸਚੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਲੋਅ ਸਚੇ ਆਕਾਰ ॥
ਸਚੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਕਰਣੇ ਸਰਬ ਬੀਚਾਰ ॥
....
ਸਚੀ ਤੇਰੀ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਸਚੇ ਪਾਤਸਾਹਿ ॥.......
ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਚੈ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਾਸੁ ॥ (463)

3. ਆਪਿ ਸਤਿ ਕੀਆ ਸਭੁ ਸਤਿ ॥ (294)
4. ਕਾਇਆ ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਸਵਾਰੇ ॥
   ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਵਸੈ ਮੁਰਾਰੇ ॥ (1059)
5. ਨਾਨਕ ਫੁਲਾ ਸੰਦੀ ਵਾੜਿ ਖਿੜਿਆ ਹਭੁ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਜਿਉ ॥ (1095)
6. ਮਨ ਬਚ ਕ੍ਰਮਿ ਰਾਮਨਾਮੁ ਚਿਤਾਰੀ ॥ (916)
7. ਮਾਣਸ ਜਨਮੁ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ (751)
8. ਹੁਕਮੇ ਧਰਤੀ ਸਾਜੀਅਨੁ ਸਚੀ ਧਰਮਸਾਲਾ ॥ (785)
9. ਸਚੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਹੈ ਕਾਰ
   ਵਰਤੁ ਨੇਮੁ ਨਿਤਾਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਪੂਜਾ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਬੂਝੇ ਸਭ ਭਾਉ ਹੈ ਦੂਜਾ ॥ (841)
10. ਅਉਗਣ ਛੋਡਹੁ ਗੁਣ ਕਰਹੁ ਐਸੇ ਤਤੁ ਪਰਾਵਾਹੁ ॥ (418)
11. ਦੇਹ ਘੋੜੀ ਜੀ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਰਾਮ ॥ (576)
12. ਫਰੀਦਾ ਭੂਮਿ ਰੰਗਾਵਲੀ ਮੰਝਿ ਵਿਸੂਲਾ ਬਾਗ ॥ (1382)
13. ਨਿੰਦਉ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਾਹੂ ਬਾਤੈ ਏਹੁ ਖਸਮ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ॥ (611)
14. ਬਲੂਆ ਕੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਬਸੈ ॥ (267)
15. ਬਿਨੁ ਬੂਝ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਸਭ ਭਏ ॥ (269)
16. ਜੇ ਤੂ ਵਤਹਿ ਅੰਙਣੇ ਹਭ ਧਰਤਿ ਸੁਹਾਵੀ ਹੋਇ ॥ (1095)
17. ਬਲੁ ਹੋਆ ਬੰਧਨ ਛੁਟੇ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੋਤ ਉਪਾਇ ॥ (1429)
18. ਏਕੁ ਅਚਾਰੁ ਰੰਗ ਇਕੁ ਰੂਪੁ ॥ ਪਉਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਅਸਰੂਪ ॥ (930)
    ਤੂ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਸਭੁ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਬਾਇਆ ॥ (849)
19. ਸਭੁ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਦੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਆਪੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਆਪੇ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ (736)
    ਇਕੋ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਏਕਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਕਾਰਾ ॥ (425)
    ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਗੁ ਧੰਧੜੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ (765)
20. ਨਾ ਸਤਿ ਰੁਖੀ ਬਿਰਖੀ ਪਥਰ ਆਪੁ ਤਛਾਵਹਿ ਦੁਖ ਸਹਹਿ ॥ (952)
21. ਗਹਰੀ ਬਿਭੂਤ ਲਾਇ ਬੈਠਾ ਤਾੜੀ ॥ ਮੇਰੀ ਤੇਰੀ ਮੁੰਦ੍ਰਾ ਧਾਰੀ ॥
    ਮਾਗਹਿ ਟੂਕਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ ਨਾਥੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਜਾਚਹਿ ਲਾਜ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥ (886)
22. ਨਿਉਲੀ ਕਰਮ ਕਰੈ ਬਹੁ ਆਸਨ ॥ ਜੈਨ ਮਾਰਗ ਸੰਜਮ ਅਤਿ ਸਾਧਨ ॥
    ਨਿਮਖ ਨਿਮਖ ਕਰਿ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਕਟਾਵੈ ॥ ਤਉ ਭੀ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਜਾਵੈ ॥ (265)
23. ਨਾ ਤੂ ਆਵਹਿ ਵਸਿ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਘਿਣਾਵਣੇ ॥ (962)

Chapter 16

The Concept of Haumen

1. ਕਿਤੁ ਕਿਤੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਪੁਰਖਾ ਕਿਤੁ ਕਿਤੁ ਦੁਖਿ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਜਾਈ ॥
   ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਪੁਰਖਾ ਨਾਮ ਵਿਸਰਿਐ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਈ ॥ (946)
   ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ (466)
2. ਹਉਮੈ ਵਡਾ ਰੋਗੁ ਹੈ ਸਿਰਿ ਮਾਰੇ ਜਮਕਾਲਿ ॥ (1258)
3. ਸਭ ਕੋ ਤੇਰਾ ਤੂ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਹਉ ਤੇਰਾ ਤੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ (768)
4. ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥ (611)

5. ਸਭ ਕੋ ਊਚਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਨੀਚੁ ਨ ਦੀਸੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
   ਇਕਨੈ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਸਾਜਿਐ ਇਕੁ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਤਿਹੁ ਲੋਇ ॥ (62)
6. ਹੋਇ ਰਹੀਐ ਸਗਲ ਕੀ ਰੀਨਾ ॥ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਮਈਆ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚੀਨਾ ॥ (866)
7. ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥
   ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ ॥ (730)
8. ਅੰਤਰਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਲਖਿਆ ਵਿਚਿ ਪੜਦਾ ਹਉਮੈ ਪਾਈ ॥ (205)
9. ਧਨ ਪਿਰ ਕਾ ਇਕ ਹੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਵਾਸਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਭੀਤਿ ਕਰਾਰੀ ॥ (1263)
10. ਜਬ ਇਹੁ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਕਰਤ ਗੁਮਾਨਾ ॥ ਤਬ ਇਹੁ ਬਾਵਰੁ ਫਿਰਤ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ॥
    ਜਬ ਇਹੁ ਹੂਆ ਸਗਲ ਕੀ ਰੀਨਾ ॥ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਰਮਈਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਚੀਨਾ ॥ (235)
11. ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਛਾਇਆ ॥ (466)
12. ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਰੋਗੁ ਸੁ ਅਧਿਕ ਵਡੇਰਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਕਾ ਮੁਹਤਾਜੁ ਭਇਆ ॥ (1153)
13. ਮਾਇਆ ਮਦਿ ਮਾਤਾ ਹੋਛੀ ਬਾਤਾ ਮਿਲਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਭਰਮ ਧੜਾ ॥ (924)
14. ਏਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮੋਹੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭਾਉ ਦੂਜਾ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ (921)
15. ਬਿਨੁ ਬੂਝ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਸਭ ਭਏ ॥ (269)
16. ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਅਰੁ ਲੋਭ ਮੋਹ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਜਾਇ ਅਹੰਮੇਵ ॥
    ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਰਣਾਗਤੀ ਕਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦੁ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ॥ (269)

Chapter 17

Solution

1. ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਪੁਰਖਾ ਨਾਮਿ ਵਿਸਰਿਐ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਈ ॥ (946)
2. ਹਉਮੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਵਿਰੋਧੁ ਹੈ ਦੁਇ ਨ ਵਸਹਿ ਇਕ ਠਾਇ ॥ (560)
3. Stace, W. T. : *Mysticism and Philosophy*, p. 126.
4. ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀਰਘ ਰੋਗੁ ਹੈ ਦਾਰੂ ਭੀ ਇਸੁ ਮਾਹਿ ॥
   ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਜੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਾ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਮਾਹਿ ॥ (466)
5. ਨਿਰਭਉ ਭੈ ਮਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ਬਲਿਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥ (773)
6. ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਇਸ ਤਨ ਤੇ ਮਾਰਿ ॥ ਹੋਇ ਰਹੀਐ ਸਗਲ ਕੀ ਰੇਨਾ ॥
   ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਮਈਆ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚੀਨਾ ॥ (866)
7. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਉਮਾਹਾ ॥ (273)
8. ਜਿਨਿ ਪੰਚ ਮਾਰਿ ਬਿਦਾਰਿ ਗੁਦਾਰੇ ਸੋ ਪੂਰਾ ਇਹੁ ਕਲੀ ਰੇ ॥ (404)
9. ਭਉ ਭੁਇ ਪਵਿਤੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਬਲੇਦ ॥
   ਹਲੁ ਹਲੇਮੀ ਹਾਲੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਚੇਤਾ ਵਤ੍ਰ ਵਖਤ ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ॥
   ਨਾਉ ਬੀਜੁ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਬੋਹਲ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸਗਲ ਦਰੋਗ ॥ (955)
10. ਅਮਲ ਜਿ ਕੀਤਿਆ ਦੁਨੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੇ ਦਰਗਹ ਓਗਾਹਾ ॥ (1383)
11. ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰੀ ਤਾ ਤੂ ਨਾਹੀ ਤੂ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਹਉ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ (1092)
12. ਆਪੇ ਜਗ ਜੀਵਨੁ ਸੁਖ ਦਾਤਾ ਆਪੇ ਬਖਸਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ ॥

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    ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਅਨੁ ਪੂਰੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਅਪਾਰ ॥ (32)
    ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਦੂਰਿ ਕਰੇਇ ॥ (30)
    ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮਹਿਲੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸਚਿ ਰਹੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ (35)
    ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਧਾਰਿ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਦਇਆਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ॥ (49)
13. ਸੇਵਕ ਭਾਇ ਵਣਜਾਰਿਆ ਮਿਤ੍ਰਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥ (82)

14. ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥
ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਤੇਰੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਰੰਗੁ ਮਾਣੁ ॥ (441)
15. ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਮੰਦਰੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਲਾਲੁ ॥ (801)
ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਾਇਆ ਊਜਲ ਹੰਸਾ ॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਅੰਸਾ ॥ (1034)
16. ਇਹੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਉਸਰੁ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਾਰ ॥ ਘਟ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਤੂ ਦੇਖੁ ਬਿਚਾਰ ॥ (1159)
17. ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥ (12)
18. ਜਬ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੀਓ ਤਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਆਇਆ ॥ (748)
19. ਪੰਚ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਕੀਨੀ ਤਤੁ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਕੀਨੁ ਰੇ ॥
ਕਰਮ ਬਧੁ ਤੁਮ ਜੀਉ ਕਹਤ ਹੌ ਕਰਮਹਿ ਕਿਨਿ ਜੀਉ ਦੀਨੁ ਰੇ ॥ (870)
20. ਮਾਇ ਨ ਹੋਤੀ ਬਾਪੁ ਨ ਹੋਤਾ ਕਰਮੁ ਨ ਹੋਤੀ ਕਾਇਆ ॥
ਹਮ ਨਹੀ ਹੋਤੇ ਤੁਮ ਨਹੀ ਹੋਤੇ ਕਵਨੁ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਆਇਆ ॥
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ਸਾਸਤੁ ਨਾ ਹੋਤਾ ਬੇਦੁ ਨ ਹੋਤਾ ਕਰਮੁ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਆਇਆ ॥ (973)
21. ਕਰਿ ਕਰਤੇ ਕਰਣੀ ਕਰਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਤੀ ਤਿਨਿ ਕੀਮਤ ਪਾਈ ॥ (932)
22. ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਚੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ ॥ (8)
23. ਮਾਟੀ ਕਾ ਲੇ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਕਰਿਆ ॥ ਉਕਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਲੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਪਰੀਖਿਆ ॥ (913)
24. ਨਾਨਕ ਅਉਗੁਣ ਜੇਤੜੇ ਤੇਤੇ ਗਲੀ ਜੰਜੀਰ ॥
ਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਨਿ ਤ ਕਟੀਅਨਿ ਸੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੇ ਵੀਰ ॥ (595)
25. ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਅਪਨਾ ਕੀਆ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਕਿਸੁ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਿਰਤੁ ਭਵਾਈ ॥ (745)
26. *The Quran* (trans., Dawood, N.J.), pp. 19, 26.
27. Bouquet, A.C. : *Comparative Religion*, p. 276.
28. *The Quran*, p. 31.
29. Bouquet, pp. 276-77, Smart, N. : *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, p. 488.
30. *The Bible*, Mathew, 26, New Testament.
31. Keith, A.B. : *The Religions and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, p. 527.
32. ਕਬੀਰ ਮਨੁ ਜਾਨੈ ਸਭ ਬਾਤ ਜਾਨਤ ਹੀ ਅਉਗਨ ਕਰੈ ॥
ਕਾਹੇ ਕੀ ਕੁਸਲਾਤ ਹਾਥ ਦੀਪੁ ਕੂਏ ਪਰੈ ॥ (1376)
33. ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਪਵੈ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥ (7)
34. ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਭਏ ਕੀਟ ਪਤੰਗਾ ॥ ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗਜ ਮੀਨ ਕੁਰੰਗਾ ॥
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ਚਿਰੰਕਾਲ ਇਹ ਦੇਹ ਸੰਜਰੀਆ ॥ (176)
35. ਫਿਰਤ ਫਿਰਤ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਜੁਗ ਹਾਰਿਓ ਮਾਨਸ ਦੇਹ ਲਹੀ ॥ (631)
36. ਮਾਟੀ ਕਾ ਲੇ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਕਰਿਆ ॥ ਉਕਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਲੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਪਰੀਖਿਆ ॥ (913)
37. ਅਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਜਿਨਿ ਤੂ ਕਰਿਆ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਜੋਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਤੂ ਸਿਰਿ ਧਰਿਆ ॥
ਅਬ ਤੂ ਸੀਝੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਨਹੀ ਸੀਝੈ ॥ (913)
38. ਦੁਲਭ ਜਨਮੁ ਚਿਰੰਕਾਲ ਪਾਇਓ ਜਾਤਉ ਕਉਡੀ ਬਦਲਹਾ ॥
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ਕਾਚ ਬਾਦਰੈ ਲਾਲੁ ਖੋਈ ਹੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਇਹੁ ਅਉਸਰੁ-ਕਦਿ ਲਹਾ ॥ (1203)
39. ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਜੋਨਿ ਸਬਾਈ ॥ ਮਾਣਸ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਦੀਈ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥

ਇਸ ਪਉੜੀ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਨਰ ਚੂਕੈ ਸੋ ਆਇ ਜਾਇ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਦਾ ॥ (1075)
40. ਜਨਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪੁੰਨਿ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਕਉਡੀ ਬਦਲੇ ਜਾਈਐ ॥ (1179)
41. ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥ (12)

Chapter 18

Goal and Gurmukh

1. ਫਰੀਦਾ ਅਮਲ ਜਿ ਕੀਤੇ ਦੁਨੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਦਰਗਹ ਆਏ ਕੰਮਿ ॥ (1383)
2. ਗੁਣ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਗੁਣ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥ (931)
3. ...ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਰਸਨਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ॥ ਜੀਵਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਵਨਾ ॥ (684)
4. ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਆਪਨੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਚਉਥੇ ਪਦ ਮਹਿ ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਏ ॥ (284)
5. ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਜੀਵਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਧਨ ਰੂਪ ॥ (701)
ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਰਸਨਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ॥ ਜੀਵਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਵਨਾ ॥ (684)
6. ਕੋਈ ਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਦੇਵੈ ਜੋਰਿ ॥ (701)
7. ਸਰਬ ਰੋਗ ਕਾ ਅਉਖਦੁ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ (274)
8. ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਸਾਥੁ ਲੰਘਾਵਹੁ ਪਾਰੇ ॥
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ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਉਤਰਸਿ ਪਾਰੇ ॥ (939)
9. ਆਪਿ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਕਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ (295)
10. ਕਰੋੜਿ ਹਸਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਟਹਲ ਕਮਾਵਹਿ ਚਰਣ ਚਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰ ਨਾਵ ਹਰਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਜੋ ਚੜੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਤਾਰਗਿ ਰਾਮ ॥ (781)
11. ਹਰਿ ਸੇਵਹੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਢਿਲ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਕਰਿਹੁ ॥ (77)
12. ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ (26)
13. ਮਨ ਤਨ ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਇਕ ਰੰਗਿ ॥ ਸਦਾ ਬਸਹਿ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ॥
ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਜਲੁ ਆਇ ਖਟਾਨਾ ॥ ਤਿਉ ਜੋਤੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਨਾ ॥ (278)
14. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਚੇ ਕੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਏ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਚੈ ਰਹੇ ਸਮਾਏ ॥ (942)
15. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਏਕ ਊਪਰਿ ਆਸ ॥ (273)
16. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੈ ਬਸੈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸੰਗ ॥ (273)
17. ਕਰਹਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਆਤਮ ਕੈ ਚਾਇ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਪਨੇ ਸਿਉ ਰਹਹਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ (286)
18. ਕਈ ਬੈਕੁੰਠ ਨਾਹੀ ਲਵੈ ਲਾਗੇ ॥
ਮੁਕਤਿ ਬਪੁੜੀ ਭੀ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤਿਆਗੇ ॥ (1078)
19. ਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲਾਰੇ ॥ (534)
20. Galloway: *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 654.
21 ਮੂ ਲਾਲਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਬਨੀ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਤੋਰੀ ਨ ਤੂਟੈ ਛੋਰੀ ਨ ਛੂਟੈ ਐਸੀ ਮਾਧੋ ਖਿੰਚ ਤਨੀ ॥੧॥
ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਤੂ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਪਨੀ ॥ (827)
22. ਅਬ ਮੋਹਿ ਖੂਬ ਵਤਨ ਗਹਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਊਹਾ ਖੈਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਕਾਇਮੁ ਦਾਇਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ॥ ਦੋਮ ਨ ਸੇਮ ਏਕ ਸੋ ਆਹੀ ॥ (345)
23. ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ (1)
24. ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਰਬ ਗੁਣੀ ਸਾਚਾ ਬੀਚਾਰ ॥ (905)
ਨਾਮ ਰਤਨੁ ਗੁਣਾ ਹਰਿ ਬਣਜੇ ਲਾਦਿ ਵਖਰੁ ਲੈ ਚਾਲਿਓ ॥ (1000)

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਚੁ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਪਵਿਤੁ ਸਰੀਰਾ ॥ ਮਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਸਦ ਗੁਣੀ ਗਹੀਰਾ ॥ (1175)
25. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਅਨਾਥ ਕਾ ਨਾਥੁ ॥ (273)
26. ਦਇਆਲ ਦੇਵ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸੁਨਿ ਸੰਤਨਾ ਕੀ ਰੀਤਿ ॥ (1017)
27. ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਸਗਲ ਉਧਾਰਨ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਦੂਖ ਬਿਸਾਰਨ ॥ (282)
28. ਜੈ ਸਿਉ ਰਾਤਾ ਤੈਸੋ ਹੋਵੈ ॥ (411)

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ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਸੇ ਤੁਧ ਹੀ ਜੇਹੇ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਬਾਲ ਸਖਾਈ ਹੇ ॥ (1021)
29. ਭਲੀ ਸਰੀ ਜਿ ਉਬਰੀ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੁਈ ਘਰਾਹੁ ॥
ਦੂਤ ਲਗੇ ਫਿਰਿ ਚਾਕਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਵੇਸਾਹੁ ॥
ਕਲਪ ਤਿਆਗੀ ਬਾਦਿ ਹੈ ਸਚਾ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੁ ॥ (18)
30. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਚੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ (1059)
ਛਤੀਹ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਭਾਉ ਏਕੁ ਜਾ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇਇ ॥ (16)
31. ਜਾ ਕਾ ਮਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਸਗਲ ਕੀ ਰੀਨਾ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਚੀਨਾ ॥ (266)
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੈ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਮਾਨਿ ॥ (272)
32. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਉਮਾਹਾ ॥ (273)
33. ਮਨੁ ਸਚਾ ਸਚੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਰਾਚੈ ॥
ਸਚਾ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਵਹਿ ਸਚੋ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਵਣਿਆ ॥ (116)
34. ਹੁਕਮੋ ਸੇਵੇ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਰਾਧੇ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਸਮੇ ਸਮਾਏ ॥

....

ਸਦਾ ਸੁਹਾਗਣਿ ਜਿ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੁਝੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵੈ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ॥ (1423)
35. ਹੁਕਮੁ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਚੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ ॥ (940)
36. ਤਉ ਦੇਵਾਨਾ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਜਾ ਏਕਾ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਇ ॥
ਹੁਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਖਸਮ ਕਾ ਦੂਜੀ ਅਵਰ ਸਿਆਣਪ ਕਾਇ ॥ (991)
37. ਮਨ ਤਨ ਅਰਪੀ ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀਜੈ ॥ (281)
38. ਹਉ ਗੋਸਾਈ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਵਾਨੜਾ ॥ (74)
39. ਜਗਦੀਸ ਸੇਵਉ ਮੈ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕਾਜਾ ॥ (798)
ਹਰਿ ਸੇਵਉ ਖਿਨੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਢਿਲ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਕਰਿਹੁ... ॥ (77)
40. ਛਛਾ ਛੋਹਰੇ ਦਾਸ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ ॥ ਦਾਸ ਦਾਸਨ ਕੇ ਪਾਨੀਹਾਰੇ ॥ (254)
ਦਾਸੁ ਸਗਲ ਕਾ ਛੋਡਿ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥ (377)
ਤਜਿ ਕੂੜੁ ਕਪਟੁ ਸੁਭਾਉ ਦੂਜਾ ਚਾਕਰੀ ਲੋਕਾਣੀਆ ॥ (844)
41. ਜਗਤ ਜਲੰਦਾ ਰਖਿ ਲੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ (853)
ਜਿਤੁ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਉਬਰੈ ਤਿਤੈ ਲੈਹੁ ਉਬਾਰਿ ॥
42. ਸੂਰਾ ਸੋ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਐ ਜੁ ਲਰੈ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ ॥ (1105)
43. ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ (8)
ਮੰਨੈ ਤਰੈ ਤਾਰੇ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ॥ (3)
ਕਹਤੇ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੈ ॥ (944)
ਆਪਿ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਕਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ (295)
44. ਕਬੀਰ ਧਰਤੀ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਤਸਕਰ ਬੈਸਹਿ ਗਾਹਿ ॥ (965)
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਸਾਚੈ ਸਾਜੀ ॥ (941)

Chapter 19

Gurus' Prophetic Communion with God

1. ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ (943)
ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ ॥ (599)
ਆਦਿ ਗੁਰਏ ਨਮਹ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਗੁਰਏ ਨਮਹ ॥ (262)
....
ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਏਕੈ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ ॥
ਸੋਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਝਿਉ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ (ਚੌਪਈ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ 10)
2. ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥ (722)
3. ਸੱਚ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ ॥ (723)
4. ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ॥ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥ (763)
5. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਹੁ
ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਮੁਹਹੁ ਕਢਾਏ ॥ (308)
6. ਵਾਹ ਵਾਹ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥
ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੀ ਸਾਚਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ॥ (754)
7. ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ (306)
8. ਸਾਹਾ ਅਟਲੁ ਗਣਿਆ ਪੂਰਨ ਸੰਜੋਗੋ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਸੁਖਹ ਸਮੂਹ ਭਇਆ ਗਇਆ ਵਿਜੋਗੋ ਰਾਮ ॥ (845-46)
9. ਵੀਆਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਾਬੁਲਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੇ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਅਗਿਆਨੁ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਕਟਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਬਲਾਇਆ ॥ (78)
10. ਜਿਉ ਅੰਧਿਆਰੈ ਦੀਪਕੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਾ ॥ ਭਗਤਾ ਚਿਤਵਤ ਪੂਰਨ ਆਸਾ ॥
ਮਿਲਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਜਿਉ ਹੋਤ ਅਨੰਦਾ ਤਿਉ ਹਰਿ ਰੰਗਿ ਮਨੁ ਰੰਗੀਨਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ (100)
11. ਫੂਟੋ ਆਂਡਾ ਭਰਮ ਕਾ ਮਨਹਿ ਭਇਓ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ॥
ਕਾਟੀ ਬੇਰੀ ਪਗਹ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੁ ॥ (1002)
12. ਕਰ ਜੋੜਿ ਸਾਧਨ ਕਰੈ ਬਿਨਤੀ ਰੈਣਿ ਦਿਨੁ ਰਸਿ ਭਿੰਨੀਆ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਰੁ ਧਨ ਕਰਹਿ ਰਲੀਆ ਇਛ ਮੇਰੀ ਪੁੰਨੀਆ ॥ (242-43)
13. ਸਾਈ ਵਸਤੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਈ ਜਿਸੁ ਸੇਤੀ ਮਨ ਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਮੇਲੁ ਭਇਆ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਘਰ ਮੰਦਰ ਸੋਹਾਏ ॥ (764)
14. ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਮਾਝ ॥ ਪਿਤਾ ਪੂਤ ਰਲਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਸਾਝ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਉ ਪਿਤਾ ਪਤੀਨੇ ॥ ਪਿਤਾ ਪੂਤ ਏਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਲੀਨੇ ॥ (1141)

Chapter 20

The Discipline

1. ਜਿਉ ਚੰਦਨ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਿਰਡ ਬਪੁੜਾ ਤਿਉ ਸਤ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਪਤਿਤ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥
(861)
2. ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਮੁਖ ਊਜਲ ਹੋਤ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਲੁ ਸਗਲੀ ਖੋਤ ॥ (271)
3. ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਿਅ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੇ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਗਾਈਐ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਈਹਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਆਗੈ ਮੁਖ ਊਜਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਸੰਤਨ ਕੈ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ (700)
ਸਚੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਚਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਚੈ ਨਾਇ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥ (586)
ਊਤਮ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਊਤਮੁ ਹੋਵੈ ॥ ਗੁਣ ਕਉ ਧਾਵੈ ਅਵਗਣ ਧੋਵੈ ॥ (414)
4. ਸਾਧ ਪਠਾਏ ਆਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਮ ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਨਾਹੀ ਦੂਰਿ ॥ (929)

5. Bergson, Henry : *Introduction to Philosophy*, edited by A. Smullyan and others, p. 369.
6. ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ (466)
7. ਏਕਮ ਏਕੈ ਆਪੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਬਿਧਿ ਮਾਇਆ ॥
ਚਉਥੀ ਪਉੜੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਊਚੀ ਸਚੋ ਸਚ ਕਮਾਵਣਿਆ ॥ (113)
8. ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਾਇ ॥
....
ਨਚਿਐ ਟਪਿਐ ਭਗਤ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਰੈ ਭਗਤਿ ਪਾਏ ਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ ॥ (159)
ਨਚਣੁ ਕੁਦਣੁ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ ਮਨਿ ਭਉ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਉ ॥ (465)
9. ਹਉਮੈ ਜਾਈ ਤਾ ਕੰਤ ਸਮਾਈ ॥ (750)
10. ਬਿਨੁ ਕਰਮਾ ਕਿਛੂ ਨ ਪਾਈਐ ਜੇ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਲੋਚਾਹੀ ॥ (1091-92)
11. ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ ॥ (15)
12. ਜਿਨਿ ਸਚੁ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਰਸੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ (1174)
ਜਿਨੀ ਸਚੁ ਵਣੰਜਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਸੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਸਾਹਾ ਰਾਮ ॥ (543)
13. ਗੁਣ ਛੋਡਿ ਅਵਗਣ ਕਮਾਵਦੇ ਦਰਗਹ ਹੋਹਿ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥
ਜੂਐ ਜਨਮੁ ਤਿਨੀ ਹਾਰਿਆ ਕਿਤੁ ਆਏ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ ॥ (1284)
14. ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ (26)
15. ਅਕਲਿ ਏਹ ਨ ਆਖੀਐ ਅਕਲਿ ਗਵਾਈਐ ਬਾਦਿ ॥
ਅਕਲੀ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਾਨੁ ॥
ਅਕਲੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਕੈ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਕੀਚੈ ਦਾਨੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ ਰਾਹੁ ਏਹੁ ਹੋਰੁ ਗਲਾਂ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ ॥ (1245)
16. ਮਾਟੀ ਕਾ ਲੇ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਕਰਿਆ ॥ ਉਕਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਲੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਪਰੀਖਿਆ ॥ (913)
17. ਗੁਣ ਅਉਗਣ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ਭੈ ਭਗਤਿ ਮੀਠੀ ਲਾਗੀ ॥ (768)
18. ਹਮਰੋ ਸਹਾਉ ਸਦਾ ਸਦ ਭੂਲਨ ਤੁਮਰੋ ਬਿਰਦੁ ਪਤਿਤ ਉਧਰਨ ॥ (828)
19. ਬਹਤੀ ਮਨਸਾ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਬਾਂਧਿ ॥.....ਅਚਰਜੁ ਭਇਆ ਜੀਵ ਤੇ ਸੀਉ ॥ (343-47)
20. ਜਿਨਿ ਪੰਚ ਮਾਰਿ ਬਿਦਾਰਿ ਗੁਦਾਰੇ ਸੋ ਪੂਰਾ ਇਹ ਕਲੀ ਰੇ ॥ (404)
21. ਹਛੀ ਮਿਟੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਮਾਨੈ ਸੋਇ ॥
ਕਰਣੀ ਤੇ ਕਰਿ ਚਕਹੁ ਢਾਲਿ ॥ ਐਥੈ ਓਥੈ ਨਿਬਹੀ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ (878)
22. ਹਾਥ ਪਾਉ ਕਰਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਸਭੁ ਚੀਤੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ (1376)
23. ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ॥ (522)
24. ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਕਹੈ ਕਹਿਐ ਰਾਮੁ ਨਾ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਰਾਮੁ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਤਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਕੋਇ ॥ (491)
25. ਹਿਦ੍ਰੈ ਕਪਟੁ ਮੁਖ ਗਿਆਨੀ ॥ ਝੂਠੇ ਕਹਾ ਬਿਲੋਵਸ ਪਾਨੀ ॥ (656)
26. ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਕਪਟੁ ਕਮਾਵਹਿ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਧੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ (732)
27. ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਉ ਸਿਮਰਹਿ ਸੇ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥ (263)
28. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤ੍ਰ ਵਿਚੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ (661)

Chapter 21

Ethics

1. ਗਨੀਮੁਲ ਸ਼ਿਕਸਤੈ ॥.....ਗਨੀਮੁਲ ਖਿਰਾਜ ਹੈ ॥ (ਜਾਪੁ, ਪਾ: 10)
2. ਮਾਸੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਬੈਸਿ ਨਕੁ ਪਕੜਹਿ ਰਾਤੀ ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੇ ॥ (1289)

3. ਮਾਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਝਗੜੇ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣੈ ॥
ਕਉਣੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਉਣੁ ਸਾਗੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਕਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਪ ਸਮਾਣੇ ॥ (1289)
4. See p. 1289-90; 472.
5. ਕਥਾ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਬੇਦੀਂ ਆਣੀ ਪਾਪੁ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
ਦੇ ਦੇ ਲੈਣਾ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਦੇਣਾ ਨਰਕਿ ਸੁਰਗਿ ਅਵਤਾਰ ॥
ਉਤਮ ਮਧਿਮ ਜਾਤੀਂ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਭਰਮਿ ਭਵੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ (1243)
6. ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨਾ ਕਰੀਅਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥
....
ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖ ਗਵਾਰਾ ॥
ਇਸੁ ਗਰਬ ਤੇ ਚਲਹਿ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਵਿਕਾਰਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਚਾਰੇ ਵਰਨ ਆਖੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਿੰਦ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਓਪਤਿ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਮਾਟੀ ਏਕ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ ॥
....
ਘਟਿ ਵਧਿ ਕੋ ਕਰੈ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ॥ (1128)
ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੋ ਪਹਚਾਨਬੋ ॥ (ਸ੍ਵਯੇ ਪਾ: 10)
7. ਮਤੁ ਭਿਟੈ ਵੇ ਮਤੁ ਭਿਟੈ ॥ ਇਹੁ ਅੰਨੁ ਅਸਾਡਾ ਫਿਟੈ ॥
ਤਨਿ ਫਿਟੈ ਫੇੜ ਕਰੇਨਿ ॥ (472)
8. ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥ (473)
9. ਸਾਹੁਰੜੀ ਵਥੁ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਸਾਝੀ ਪੇਵਕੜੈ ਧਨ ਵਖੇ ॥ (1171)
10. ਸਿੰਚਹਿ ਦਰਬੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਲੋਗ ॥ (889)
11. ਪਾਪਾ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਮੁਇਆ ਸਾਥਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥ (417)
12. ਮਾਗਹਿ ਟੂਕਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ ਨਾਥੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਜਾਚਹਿ ਲਾਜ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥ (886)
13. ਮਖਟੂ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਕੰਨ ਪੜਾਏ ॥ ਫਕਰੁ ਕਰੇ ਹੋਰੁ ਜਾਤਿ ਗਵਾਏ ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਸਦਾਏ ਮੰਗਣ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਲਗੀਐ ਪਾਇ ॥
ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ ॥ (1245)
14. ਸਗਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਮਹਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨੁ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਮਿਟੈ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥
ਆਪਸ ਕਉ ਜੋ ਜਾਣੈ ਨੀਚਾ ॥ ਸੋਊ ਗਨੀਐ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਊਚਾ ॥ (266)
15. ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਜਿਸ ਕੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਬਸਾਵੈ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਈਹਾ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਆਗੈ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ (278)
16. ਗਰੀਬੀ ਗਦਾ ਹਮਾਰੀ ॥ ਖੰਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਰੇਨੁ ਛਾਰੀ ॥
ਇਸੁ ਆਗੈ ਕੋ ਨ ਟਿਕੈ ਵੇਕਾਰੀ ॥ (628)
17. ਸਾਚ ਕਹੋ ਸੁਨ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਭੈ ਜਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਓ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਇਓ ॥ (ਸ੍ਵਯੇ ਪਾ: 10)
18. ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥ (1412)
19. ਕਹਾ ਭਇਓ ਜਉ ਤਨੁ ਭਇਓ ਛਿਨੁ ਛਿਨੁ ॥
ਪ੍ਰੇਮੁ ਜਾਇ ਤਉ ਡਰਪੈ ਤੇਰੋ ਜਨੁ ॥ (486)
20. ਮੇਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿਉ ਜਿਨਿ ਘਟੈ ॥
ਮੈ ਤਉ ਮੋਲਿ ਮਹਗੀ ਲਈ ਜੀਅ ਸਟੈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਬਿਨਾ ਭਾਉ ਨਹੀ ਊਪਜੈ ॥ ਭਾਵ ਬਿਨੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਹੋਇ ਤੇਰੀ ॥ (694)
21. ਜਪ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਹਰਖ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਨ ਮਹਤ ਅਰੁ ਗਰਬ ॥
ਮੂਸਨ ਨਿਮਖਕ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪਰਿ ਵਾਰਿ ਵਾਰਿ ਦੇਂਉ ਸਰਬ ॥ (1364)

Chapter 22

The Khands

1. ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ॥ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਕੇ ਰੰਗ ॥ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਨੰਤ ॥
ਕਰਮੀ ਕਰਮੀ ਹੋਇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਸਚਾ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥ ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਪਵੈ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥
ਕਚ ਪਕਾਈ ਓਥੈ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗਇਆ ਜਾਪੈ ਜਾਇ ॥੩੪॥
ਧਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਏਹੋ ਧਰਮੁ ॥ ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਆਖਹੁ ਕਰਮੁ ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਵੈਸੰਤਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕਾਨ ਮਹੇਸ ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਬਰਮੇ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਅਹਿ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਕੇ ਵੇਸ ॥
ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕਰਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਮੇਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਧੂ ਉਪਦੇਸ ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਇੰਦ ਚੰਦ ਸੂਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਮੰਡਲ ਦੇਸ ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਸਿਧ ਬੁਧ ਨਾਥ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਵੇਸ ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵ ਦਾਨਵ ਮੁਨਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਰਤਨ ਸਮੁੰਦ ॥
ਕੇਤੀਆ ਖਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੀਆ ਬਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੇ ਪਾਤ ਨਰਿੰਦ ॥
ਕੇਤੀਆ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੇਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥੩੫॥
ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡੁ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੋਡ ਅਨੰਦੁ ॥
ਸਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪੁ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਐ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਨੂਪ ॥
ਤਾਕੀਆ ਗਲਾ ਕਥੀਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਹਿ ॥ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਹੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਛੁਤਾਇ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਬੁਧਿ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਾ ਸਿਧਾ ਕੀ ਸੁਧਿ ॥੩੬॥
ਕਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੋਰੁ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰੁ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰ ॥ ਤਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਸੀਤੋ ਸੀਤਾ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਮਾਹਿ ॥ ਤਾਕੇ ਰੂਪ ਨ ਕਥਨੇ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਨਾ ਠਾਗੇ ਜਾਹਿ ॥ ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਰਾਮ ਵਸੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਭਗਤ ਵਸਹਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਅ ॥ ਕਰਹਿ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਸਚਾ ਮਨਿ ਸੋਇ ॥
ਸਚਿ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਨਦਰ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰ ਭੰਡ ॥ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਥੈ ਤ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਅੰਤ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਲੋਅ ਲੋਅ ਆਕਾਰ ॥ ਜਿਵ ਜਿਵ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ ॥
ਵੇਖੈ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਕਰਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਥਨਾ ਕਰੜਾ ਸਾਰੁ ॥੩੭॥ (7-8)

Chapter 23

Guru

1. ਨਾਉ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਾਦਰੁ ਕਰੇ ਕਿਉ ਬੋਲੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੋ ਖੀਵਦੈ ॥
....
ਨਾਨਕਿ ਰਾਜੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਟੁ ਸਤਾਣੀ ਨੀਵਦੈ ॥
... .
ਜੋਤਿ ਓਹਾ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਾਇ ਸਹਿਕਾਇਆ ਫੇਰਿ ਪਲਟੀਐ ॥ (966)
ਜੋਤਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹਾਯਉ ॥

ਤਾ ਤੇ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਭਯਉ ਤਤ ਸਿਉ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਯਉ ॥ (1408)
2. ਸੁਣੀ ਪੁਕਾਰ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਠਾਇਆ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਵਾਰ 1)
3. ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ (942)
4. ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ (943)
5. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਖੋਜਿ ਲਹੈ ਘਰੁ ਆਪੇ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੈ ਮਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਠਉਰਾ ॥ (415)
6. ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ ॥ (599)
7. ਜਿਸੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨ ਭੇਟਿਓ ਸੁ ਭਉ ਜਲਿ ਪਚੈ ਪਚਾਇ ॥ (22)
8. ਗੁਰ ਦੇਵਾ ਗੁਰ ਅਲਖ ਅਭੇਵਾ ॥ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਸੋਝੀ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ॥ (1125)
9. ਭੁਲਣ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਅਭੁਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ॥ (61)
10. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਮਿਲੇ ਵਿਛੁੰਨੀ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਆਗੈ ਰਾਖੈ ॥ (1111)
11. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਹੁ ਹਰਿਕਰਤਾ
ਆਪਿ ਮੁਹਹੁ ਕਢਾਏ ॥ (308)
ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ (306)
12. ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤ ਏਕੈ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ ॥
ਸੋਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਝਿਯਹੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ (ਚੌਪਈ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ 10)
13. ਆਦਿ ਗੁਰਏ ਨਮਹ ॥ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਗੁਰਏ ਨਮਹ ॥ (262)
14. ਗੁਰੁ ਸਮਰਥੁ ਅਪਾਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਨਿਰਮਲਾ ਗੁਰ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਰਣਹਾਰੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਚੀ ਸੋਇ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਹੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਲੋੜੇ ਸੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
... ...
ਗੁਰ ਸਮਰਥੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਗੁਰ ਊਚਾ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥ (52)
15. ਜੋ ਜੋ ਦੀਸੈ ਸੋ ਸੋ ਰੋਗੀ ॥ ਰੋਗ ਰਹਿਤ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਜੋਗੀ ॥ (1140)
16. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ (759)
17. "ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਮਾਤਾ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਪਿਤਾ" ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ "ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰ" ਤਕ (250)
18. "ਅਨਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਭਰੇਪੁਰਿ ਧਾਰਿਆ" ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ "ਪੂਰਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰੀ ਬਣਤ ਬਣਾਈ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤ ਮਿਲੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥" ਤਕ (376-77)
19. "ਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ" ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ "ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਹਰਿ ਸੋਇ ॥" ਤਕ (864-65)
20. ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਟੈ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੈ ਸੁਗਿਆਨੁ ॥
ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਬੁਝੈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਨੇਰਾ ॥
... .
ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ॥ (271)
21. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸੰਗ ਸਗਲ ਉਧਾਰੁ ॥ (273)
22. ਆਪਿ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਕਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥......ਆਪਿ ਤਰੈ ਲੋਕਹ ਨਿਸਤਾਰ ॥ (295)

Chapter 24

Mystic Immortality

1. ਜੇ ਕੋ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਡਰੈ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸਰਨੀ ਪਰੈ ॥ (266)
2. ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨਿ ਦੂਖ ਜਮੁ ਨਸੈ ॥ (262)
3. ਏਕ ਊਪਰਿ ਜਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਕੀ ਆਸਾ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਕਟੀਐ ਜਮ ਕੀ ਫਾਸਾ ॥ (281)
4. ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੇ ਸੁਖੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਨ ਲਗੈ ਆਇ ॥
ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਮਿਟਿ ਗਇਆ ਕਾਲੈ ਕਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਨ ਬਸਾਇ ॥ (651)

5. ਗਇਆ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਆਇ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਰਹੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥
... ...
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ਨਿਸੰਗੁ ॥ (932)
6. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੂਝੈ ਏਕ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ॥ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸੈ ਸਾਚਿ ਸਮਾਏ ॥
ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਠਾਕਿ ਰਹਾਏ ॥ (222)

Chapter 25
The Lives of Gurus

1. The chapter is based mainly on *History of the Sikh Gurus* by Dr. H.R. Gupta.
2. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 967.
3. Macauliffe, op. cit; vol. i, p. 259.
4. Zimmer, op. cit; pp. 462-463.
5. *ibid*, p. 463.
6. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 730.
7. Sarup Das Bhalla : *Mehma Parkash*, i, p. 326.
8. *Bhai Gurdas*, first year.
9. Gupta, op. cit; p. 57.
10. *ibid*, pp. 67-68.
11. *ibid*, p. 73.
12. *ibid*, p. 59.
13. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 967.
14. *Gur Bilas Patshahi Chhevin*, p.85; *Mehma Parkash*, ii, p.395.
15. Gupta, op. cit; p. 110.
16. *ibid*, p. 102.
17. *ibid*, p. 90.
18. Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzeb*, p. 156.
19. Gupta, op. cit; p. 114.
20. *ibid.*
21. Timur Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali's son, quoted by Banerjee, A.C. : *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Amritsar, Vol. III, No. 1 (Feb. 1976), p. 61.
22. Gupta, op. cit; p. 143.
23. *ibid*, pp. 177-178.
24. *Chandi Charitra*, i, 231.
25. Macauliffe, op. cit; Vol. v, p. 109.
26. Gupta, op. cit; p. 177.
27. Chaupa Singh Chhibber : *Rehat-nama*.
28. *Gur Sobha* (ed. Ganda Singh), pp. 21, 32.
29. Gupta, op. cit; pp. 193-195.
30 *ibid*, p. 207.
31. *ibid*, pp. 148-149.
32. *ibid*, p. 245.
33. *ibid*, p. 246.

Chapter 26
A Sikh Mystic

1. Sant Harbhajan Singh 'Rajj' : *Hans Sarvar*, p. 88.
2. *ibid*, pp. 106-107.
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